THE JEWISH WOMEN'S MAGAZINE

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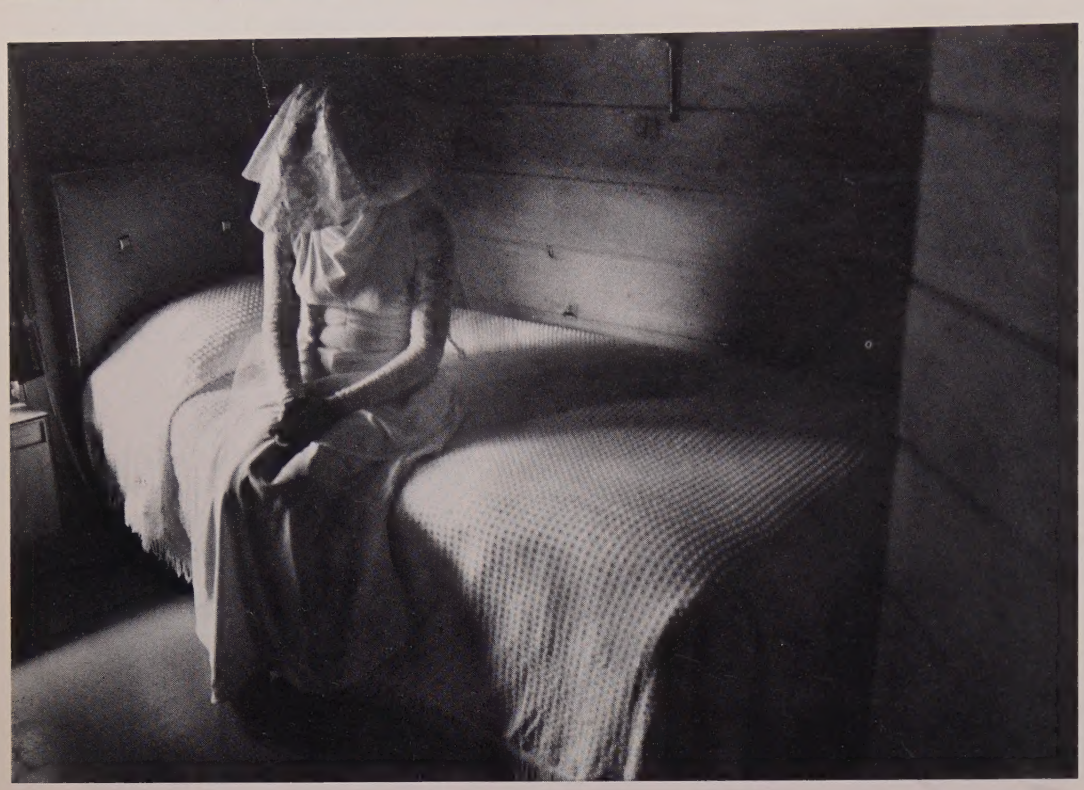
Lilith

lith, the first woman, said to Adam,
e first man: "We are both equal
cause we both came from the earth."

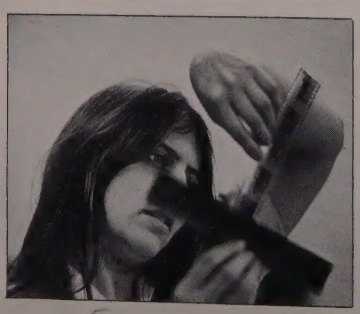
CYNTHIA OZICK
A Vindication of the Rights of Jewish Women

Why Did Golda Fight Feminism?

he Politics Behind Ordaining Women Rabbis



Orthodox Jewish Wedding in the Rain, 1974



Brooklyn-born Suris is a 34-year-old, self-taught photojournalist. She began photographing while teaching English at Hebrew University in Jerusalem eight years ago. Her work has been exhibited, and published in major magazines. Now she divides her time between photography: free-lance assignments, private commissions and personal portraiture, and Sher Art Images: a business venture which produces high quality photo calendars, note cards and posters.

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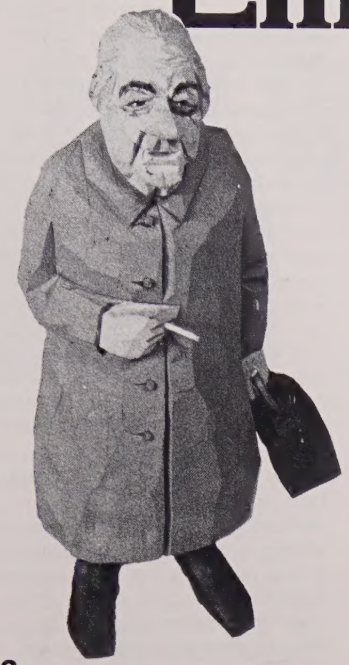

cover
For centuries of exile and oppression, Jewish women provided the support system that enabled men to be scholars, mystics and religious arbiters. Now women are rising, throwing off the burden of the enabler role, and participating fully in all areas of Jewish religious, cultural, communal and political life.
Woodcut by Paula J. Goodman

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by Reena Sigman Friedman

Eve Kessler

A mere 50—mostly male—embers of the Jewish Theogical Seminary Senate have been empowered to make a decision in January that will profoundly affect Jewry: whether to ordain women as onservative rabbis. LILITH's News Editor reports on the debate in the Conservative vement on this controversial issue.

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by Evelyn Torton Beck

he Nobel Prizewinner's work not only a distortion of the ty of East European Jewish life generally, but is also permeated with a pernicious view of women as insatiable sexual predators.

16 Golda's Ambiguous Legacy

by Pnina Lahav

Why did this extraordinary woman leave us a legacy of Zionism without Feminism when she herself suffered discrimination as a woman and struggled mightily against stereotyped gender roles "to be a person"?

19 Notes Toward Finding the Right Question

(A Vindication of the Rights of Jewish Women)

By Cynthia Ozick

Layle Silbert

What is the *real* nature of the "Woman Question" in Judaism? In exploring this issue, the author excavates layer upon layer of questions, sifts through the evidence, and continues to dig deeper until she reveals the heart of the matter. A special pull-out section.

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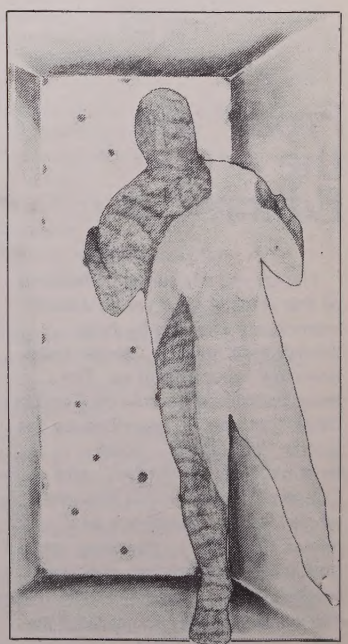
by Nessa Rapoport



An unforgettable short story that pioneers in the new genre of Jewish feminist fiction.

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From the Editors

The theme of the major features of this issue is how we as Jewish women are affected by how Jewish men and the Jewish tradition view us and treat us. The issue features an article by Cynthia Ozick that can be described by the words "landmark," "breakthrough," "authoritative," and "classic." Ozick ranges over the whole Jewish experience as it relates to women—theology, synagogue life, the Talmud, special prayers written for women, the Holocaust, the nature of Scripture—uncovering layer after layer until she penetrates to the core. Her thesis, that the highest precepts of Judaism will be realized only through full equality for women, is one that will serve as the subject of discussion and study, and the basis for further exploration of the issue by the entire Jewish community. We are delighted to welcome Ozick to the pages of LILITH Magazine.

The attitudes that Ozick uncovers are those that inform the thought and action of many in the Conservative movement around the question of the ordination of women rabbis. As Reena Sigman Friedman's investigatory report on "The Politics of Ordination" shows, this issue must be dealt with in the context of how Conservative Jews define being a Jew. And, as we learn from Ozick, women were never considered Jews; we were just a ladies' auxiliary, a support system that enabled *men* to fulfill themselves as Jews.

The ordination of Conservative women, should it come to pass, will therefore have long-range repercussions. If the country's largest branch of Judaism ordains women, this will demonstrate a strong move away from the oppressive notion of woman as enabler for male aspirations in areas besides the spiritual sphere. It will be a major breakthrough for women in community life generally.

Prejudiced male attitudes toward women contaminate the work even of those men we would like to think of as fairly progressive. While the Nobel Prize-winner I.B. Singer says publicly that women should not be excluded from being Jews, the portraits of women in his novels are rooted in misogyny, writes Evelyn Torton Beck.

These male attitudes have, unfortunately, been internalized by many women. Golda Meir, *aleha hashalom*, fought feminism tooth and nail at the same time that she fought to be recognized for her work. Pnina Lahav puts forth her ideas on Golda's legacy to Jewish feminists.

From substantive matters to *tachlis*, the practical matters that Jewish women have always been taught to excell at. In the few years we have been publishing LILITH, the magazine's subscription list has expanded greatly, and outgrown the subscription system we started out with. It is for this reason that some of our subscribers have been experiencing difficulties (e.g., not receiving copies and/or not being credited with renewals etc.). We are now in the process of changing to a computerized mailing system. Hopefully, the new system will be efficient and accurate. To help get the system operational, we will need your cooperation.

It is imperative, if you have moved in the past two years or are moving in the near future, to send LILITH *both* your old and new addresses *and* zip or postal codes. Please use the change of address form on Page 39. Readers—especially those who have changed addresses since first subscribing—should be aware that the magazine is sent by third-class mail and the Post Office never forwards (or returns) third-class mail. It costs LILITH more than $3. to replace each issue mailed to someone who has moved without sending in an address change. Please be assured that for each year's subscription to LILITH you are entitled to four issues of the magazine, even if these issues do not arrive during one calendar year.

We are planning a major subscription drive in the fall to double or even triple our subscription list. This will help attract advertising,—the key to gaining a solid financial footing—and to more issues being published more frequently. We are asking each and every reader to send us lists of potential subscribers for us to send subscription information to. Many readers have already sent such lists [*see "Lottery" notice on Page 39*]. Even if you have already done so, please take a few moments to make a list of friends and relatives, colleagues and members of your organization who might want to learn about LILITH.

We take the opportunity to wish you a Shana Tovah, happy new year 5740.

Lilith

Lilith is named for the legendary predecessor of Eve, who insisted on equality with Adam.

After the holy One created the first human being, Adam, He created a woman, also from the earth, and called her "Lilith." Adam said, "You are fit to be below me and I above you." Lilith said, "We are both equal because we both come from the earth." (From the *Alphabet of Ben Sira*, 23 a-b)

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The Editors welcome and thank the founding members of Friends of LILITH—supporters of the magazine who have given $100 or more to make this issue possible:
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Issue #5's great debate on volunteer activities, such as the leadership training course taken by these Pioneer Women, continues in the letters.

mmunication

Editors:

delighted to read the articles Jewish women in jail by Weidman Schneider and on eer organizations. It was two price of one, for me, as I been in a leadership role in tional Council of Jewish n for a number of years, and instrumental in forming a unit for the Jewish women Federal Penitentiary serviced Evanston-Niles Section of W.

wish Women in Prison? I believe it!" That's what many il women said when I t our project to our national tion in New York City in 1977.

y of the Evanston-Niles Sec- omen (I said many, not all) nvolved early on in the r movement against our ement in Vietnam. The broad class didn't feel concerned what was happening there. ver, the Evanston-Niles , whose leadership took sly the fact that it was a var, spoke out early against ched and petitioned for the the hostilities. We were the ection (I think) that came to int Program Institute in ngton, D.C., and offered a ion to impeach President It didn't win the approval of t of the women. However, k a resolution on amnesty to 75 National Convention in ancisco.

section has 450 women, and on-Niles Township is adja- Chicago. The median age is en 35–60. Many of us ber the Joe McCarthy '50's. e seriously our resolutions l liberties and individual

With this in mind, we were aware of the efforts of women like Jane Kennedy, who attempted to bring to the attention of a democratic society the madness of war. In May 1976, Jane Kennedy was released from Alderson, the Federal Correctional Institution in West Virginia, after serving five years for destroying draft records and spilling blood on tapes at the Dow Chemical Company plant that was manufacturing the napalm used in Vietnam against the civilian population. A registered nurse, she was harassed while in prison for her efforts to help women with their health problems [and so suffered] many reprisals, including solitary confinement, because of her leadership.

We did not know about the Jewish women in prison until we gave Jane Kennedy the NCJW Hannah Greenebaum Solomon Award (named for our founder) and with it $100. She sent the check to the women at Alderson. When Sister Rose Ann Hefner, a Catholic nun, saw the check came from the NCJW, she told [a Jewish woman prisoner] who has been there five years. This woman wrote us that "Since we are the smallest of the religious groups, there is little of our faith or traditions."

I worked with our section to get women to send to Alderson books, with Jewish content if possible, cards, warm clothing, and to establish a link between them and the outside world. The Jewish women prisoners wanted to establish some Jewish identity. Two years ago we sent a set of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* to Alderson. Throughout the year there is a steady stream of letters and small gifts. At Passover and Rosh Hashana, we are allowed to send food that is in keeping with the holiday tradition. All articles are sent to Sister Rose Ann Hefner for distribution to the Jewish women. For books and magazines for a particular inmate, we have to ask permission of the Warden.

How many Jewish women are there at Alderson? Sometimes eight or nine, sometimes, four or five. What are they there for? In all the years of letter-writing, I've never asked.

One of the prisoners told me that they were allowed to watch the television production of what happened to Jews on the European continent before and during the Holocaust. It was after this viewing that the black women learned for the first time that they weren't the only group that suffered humiliation and discrimination.

Dorothy King
Evanston, IL

To the Editors:

I had a mixed reaction to Susan Weidman Schneider's article. In many ways, it was a superb and pioneering attempt to explore the lives of Jewish women in the Bedford Hills "correctional facility." Because of the author's obvious respect and empathy for these women, they came through as strong, sensitive, caring individuals whose fate should concern the Jewish community. It was most important that these women were allowed to speak for themselves in the article, rather than having their experiences "interpreted" by an outside journalist.

At the same time, I feel that the article contained many unfortunate inferences about black and Hispanic women at Bedford Hills. These women were not presented as distinct individuals with whom readers might identify. And they were not allowed to speak for themselves—even though many Third World women at Bedford Hills, including Carol Crooks and Dollree Mapp, have written courageous and eloquent statements about the horrors that they face in jail.

I believe that black anti-Semitism is a real issue that should be faced. But, too often in Jewish circles, this issue is given a very prominent

(Contd. on Page 4.)

Correction

Inadvertently, the stanzas of this poem by Elsa Nad did not appear in their correct order in LILITH –5:

Sarah

My husband was had
In the whirling of the wind
In the maelstrom of future witness
He delighted and made peace
With conversion to the unknown.

I followed in silence as is my way
Neither accepting nor denying
vision.
Quietly, I packed the belongings
of a lifetime;
The silver goblet given me
my wedding day
Along with white gown
with silvered girdle.
I pressed a flower-fruit
of flowering plum
And left
To follow camel bearers out
into the sands,
Left to wander
with lamb flocks bleating
For tented nights
And following following ...

Twice I crept into foreign beds
to protect my lord,
Soothing a husband's fears
with practiced blandishments
'Til he who followed the Whirlwind
Was admonished for hiding
behind a woman's skirts.

Womb empty I offered him
solace with a slave,
The variability of desert winds
a fact
To reckon with
And act.
Though who should know the end
of that woman's pride!

I put an end to that
When in the desert's shimmering
came laughter
And my son,
Isaac of the gentle eyes,
Isaac of the promise kept,
Isaac, out of laughter into joy.
Thus I learned
Promises are made the young
'Tis the order of survival.
But sometimes in the night
Our tears are dried in holy wonder.

focus (even obscuring the much greater danger of *white* anti-Semitism), while the equally real issue of Jewish racism is totally ignored.

In a time of rising Nazi and Ku Klux Klan activity across the nation, it seems essential that every attempt be made to *break down*, rather than exacerbate, the deep tensions and hostilities which divide Jews from blacks and other Third World peoples.

Bob Lamm
New York, NY

Lilith #5 is most impressive, especially the piece on Jewish women in jail.

Nat Hentoff
New York, NY

Dear Editor:

Reading your fifth issue of LILITH compelled me to write this letter, as I recently astounded my *very* supportive family when I informed them that I have had it with volunteering.

This decision did not come easily. I have always felt a deep moral obligation to try and give just a little something back to the community that has been so good to me. In fact, there have been innumerable times that I felt, and still feel, that I gained much more from volunteering than I gave; so I face the future with just a little trepidation. Nevertheless, I feel that for my own self-respect, I must make a break to decide what I can do with the rest of my life.

To backtrack a little: [after marriage and work in the business world] to fill my time, I started volunteering with National Council of Jewish Women as a tutor in the public schools. It didn't take long before my managerial skills were tapped, and I assumed other obligations and helped establish a day-care program for preschool children. This was then taken over by the professionals, and I was shut out of the decision-making process.

Then I worked as a volunteer for Jewish Family Service as a para-professional case-aide in a senior center. When monies were available from the government to enable JFS to move to a bigger place, I helped by drawing up the plan, finding the contractor, buying and *schnorring* the furnishings, and revamping the filing system.

I had been disregarded by the men during all the decisions involving business matters, and ignored when I worked for nine weeks, seven days a week putting all this together. I was able to save them thousands of dollars by bypassing a middleperson, but when someone asked who drew the plans and was told, he said "A woman?"

When articles appeared in the newspapers describing the new center, nothing was mentioned about the work being done by the volunteers. When I mentioned this to the director, I was told that no one had thought to write about it.

Throughout all this, I have been encouraged by my husband to continue as a volunteer. I enjoy responsibility and challenges, but I leave it to the younger women to carry on the struggle. I am very disheartened by the intelligent, lovely Jewish women that I have met who serve on the boards—who have the time and the money to support their fellow women, but seem disinclined to do so.

(name withheld)

To The Editor:

I found issue #5 interesting and stimulating. I was sorry that Pearl Water had found National Council of Jewish Women disappointing as a feminist organization, but individual changes of interest are inevitable. Ours is a multi-faceted organization and priorities are democratically selected ....

The article that really bothered me was the one by Aviva Cantor ("The Sheltered Workshop ") .... Most of her generalities are untrue, at least so far as the National Council of Jewish Women is concerned. A few examples will suffice:

Ms. Cantor: "lack of confidence and self-esteem ... reinforced by these organizations ... retards personal growth."

Fact: NCJW is constantly working to establish self-esteem and confidence. In 1975, 250 top leaders spent a week learning management techniques and skills development at the Vanderbilt University Business School. This year we have produced a self-development series, training membership in group dynamics, decision making, conflict resolution, communication and assertiveness. NCJW awards Continuing Education Units. Those that have been submitted to universities for approval of course content have received endorsement. We have been invited to join the National Council on the Continuing Education Unit. NCJW looks forward to being the first volunteer organization included in their membership.

Ms. Cantor: engaging in "endless repetition of boring scut-work ..."

Fact: All programs in NCJW are conceived of and prepared by volunteers with staff support. Volunteers innovated such programs as Retired Senior Volunteer Program, court monitoring of juvenile justice procedures, Meals-on-Wheels, Golden Age Clubs and many more.

Ms. Cantor: "The organization's female leaders collude with the Jewish Establishment's male leaders for a common end: keeping women segregated ...."

Fact: NCJW undertook two years ago to bring women into prominence as paid members and as volunteers in the Jewish Community Relations field. As a result of our efforts, a task force on equal rights for women was established in the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council. This task force, chaired by Esther R. Landa as President of NCJW, has issued a study of positions and salary levels of women as compared to men in community relations agencies and has involved all such agencies in the campaign for ERA ratification and abortion rights.

Ms. Cantor: "Instead of preparing women for work in the 'real world' ... the volunteer organizations are an alternative unreal world ...."

Fact: Many active NCJW members have been able to find rewarding paid jobs as a result of their NCJW experience. These range from election as state legislators to director of voluntary service organizations. These women almost invariably continue their volunteer roles in NCJW. In addition, we have published a widely-used NCJW career Portfolio to provide serious, trained volunteers with a record that serves as a resume. This publication has been used by women in getting jobs, running for elective office and qualifying for higher education.

NCJW feels strongly that women have a right to choose how they shall spend their lives. Men told us for many years that we should not work outside the home. Are other women any more entitled to tell us today that we must do so? If women want to be volunteers and find volunteering a fulfilling occupation, they should be free to do what they wish to do, and without apology ....

I will close on a personal note. I have during a long career held many professional and volunteer positions. In neither capacity would I have felt that my self-esteem would allow me to produce a piece of work which was not well-researched and specific on my chosen topic. To my knowledge, no one in NCJW was questioned about the facts in Ms. Cantor's article, nor was any request made for materials relating to her interest. Is this the professionalism to which volunteers should aspire?

Marjorie Merlin Cohen
Executive Director
National Council of Jewish Women
New York, NY

To The Editor:

I read issue #5 of LILITH with great interest and some astonishment. The article entitled "The Volun Organizations, Vanguard or Re guard?" by Paula Hyman and one by Betty Lieberman on Ha sah contain misstatements and incorrect conclusions drawn fr unsupported inferences.

Re Mrs. Hyman's article:

1. The first sentence, "Jew women's organizations were n always out of touch with the n of their members," reflects ac ance of an unsupported premi Speaking only for Hadassah, w are very much in touch with th needs of members.

2. Hadassah is very definitel not a women's organization in sense discussed. Hadassah is a Zionist organization whose me bers are women. It began beca a group of women felt impelle participate in the building of th Jewish homeland, Palestine. H dassah leaders threw off the y of male dominance a long time when they refused to function women's division and asserted independence.

3. Hadassah's program has never been directed to "articul and meeting the special needs women clients." In pre-state P tine, Hadassah addressed itself the health needs of the entire community, not merely to the health needs of women and ch dren. In Israel today, Hadassah supports healing, teaching, research, education and rehabi tion services for men, women children. In the United States, girls and boys are serviced thro Hadassah's dynamic youth program.

4. The statement ... that women have little say in the decision-making process is a g ality which has little validity. Women, and in particular Hada women, are involved in decisio making in all umbrella entities the Jewish scene. They are respected community leaders i every sense of the word.

Re Ms. Lieberman's article:

We must dissent from her co clusion and point up factual er

1. " ... *in Milwaukee there's been no significant change in t number of members in the last years*." True, Ms. Lieberman. However, we must point out th growth of Jewish population i that community has also been static, according to the *Americ Jewish Year Book*. Hadassah membership figures for Milwau show: (a) regular increase in lif membership enrollment; (b) re reenrollment; (c) regular enroll of new members; (d) 42% of a Jewish women in Milwaukee a members of Hadassah.

When one considers that thi a "no growth" community alo with normal attrition through death, moving, etc., we consid this a pretty good record. Cert we would consider it better if

(Contd. on Page 39.)

Discrimination Against Women Educators

A study by the American Association for Jewish Education revealed that the small percentage of women in supervisory jobs in the field stems both from discrimination and from women's response to it.

The survey took the form of a questionnaire sent to women educators in the metropolitan areas to determine why only 10% were working as principals, supervisors and education directors. Published in December, the survey eliminated as reasons the lack of adequate training and the superior qualification of male candiates for such jobs.

The major problem women educators face, said the study, was that they were simply not taken seriously by their male colleagues and superiors. As one woman said, "The innovative and expert skills of well-educated and efficient women are being misused by male superiors who think of them and treat them as 'girls.' " The survey's conclusion was that there were two types of discrimination: "perceived discrimination" against women who aspire to high level positions in Jewish education and, in a sense, self-discrimination by women themselves, who rule this type of work out because they hold traditional Jewish concepts of the role of women, have higher personal priorities involving family, have a lower self-image, and feel their opportunities for training to fill these positions are limited."

The study uncovered five major reasons for the failure of women to advance to positions of greater authority in Jewish education:

* The regarding of women teachers as volunteers rather than professionals and expecting them to accept lower salaries
* The traditional bias against women's studying certain classical Jewish texts which are often the prerequisite for higher positions
* The combining of the role of synagogue education director with that of Assistant Rabbi, a title few women have, and none in the Conservative or Orthodox communities
* Fears by many women that additional responsibility will interfere with their family lives
* Concern by women about their ability to be sufficiently assertive in dealing with rabbis and other synagogue officials.

As a result of this poor treatment of women teachers, the study pointed out, many of the most talented and educated women are opting for careers outside of Jewish education, which offer them both higher status and salaries.

In order to remedy this situation, the study recommended that "the entire structure of Jewish education must be upgraded and professionalized. Relevant standards should be established and strictly adhered to when personnel for Jewish schools are being hired." It concluded:

"If Jewish education is to become the force in Jewish life that it should be, the talents of half the Jewish population must be utilized optimally. Women must be given access to leadership positions so that the best qualified will seek them. Women should be encouraged to re-evaluate their own views of themselves in the light of the contribution they can make to Jewish education. Finally, women as well as men must feel that they are participating as leaders in the most important profession in Jewish life, education, and not in an activity which is held in low repute. Otherwise, our children and our future are indeed being shortchanged."

Eddi Wolk

Immigrant Women

In May, 1902, scores of outraged Jewish housewives took to the streets chanting slogans, dousing the meat in butcher store windows with petroleum and setting it afire. Some 15 years later, the young female members of Local 25 of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union established a social and educational center to overcome the tedium of sweatshops.

These phenomena of Jewish women's history were explored by speakers on "Immigrant Women," at a Conference on Culture and Community Among New York Jews, at Columbia University in January. A related paper, on Yiddish women writers and poets, was presented in an earlier session by Dr. Norma Fain Pratt of Mt. San Antonio College, who is writing a book on the subject. The conference, sponsored by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, was open to the public.

Dr. Paula Hyman, Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish History at Columbia, focused upon the Jewish women who organized the well-known "Kosher Meat Riots" of 1902. They subsequently formed a committee—The Ladies' Anti-Beef Trust Association—to coordinate widespread boycotts of kosher butchers. The women who led the boycott had both a clear economic objective and a highly developed political strategy. They referred to themselves as "strikers."

It has generally been assumed that only the young, single Jewish women involved in labor unions and political parties in the early years of the century were political activists. Yet, Hyman concluded, many married Jewish women, representing the entire spectrum of religious and political views, displayed equally sophisticated political sensibilities through consumer protest such as the Kosher Meat Riots and the rent strikes of 1904.

Lewis Hine

Jewish women like this new arrival generally did factory work until marriage but their political consciousness persisted.

It was to the struggles and achievements of the wage-earning women involved in labor unions that the next panelist, Dr. Alice Kessler-Harris, of Hofstra University, turned her attention. The great majority of women employed in garment shops in the early 20th Centurv were young, single and the daughters of immigrant families. East European Jewish women demonstrated remarkable interest in labor unions and joined them in large numbers. Their strength and perseverence in the shirtwaist makers' strike of 1909–10 won the sympathy of New Yorkers of all walks of life, and Jewish women remained active in the garment unions well into the 1930s and 1940s.

A significant factor in the rapid and effective organization of Jewish women workers in the garment trades was the dedication and hard work of female Jewish organizers such as Fannia Cohen, Pauline Newman, Rose Pesotta and Rose Schneiderman, said Kessler-Harris. Such women led difficult lives.

"To do good in the world meant to forego family and friends," the speaker said. Because many of them never married, they were often scorned as "old maids" within the Jewish community. At the same time, they struggled to overcome resistance and antagonism on the part of male leaders within the garment unions.

Single women often became objects of pity or derision within the immigrant Jewish community. The plight of the unmarried aunt, a member of many first and second generation Jewish families, was sensitively portrayed by the third speaker, Grace Paley, who read her popular short story, "Goodbye and Good Luck." (©JTA)

Reena Sigman Friedman

Kol
Nshah
man's voice."
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sh woman
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e pages are for news
t Jewish women,
lly in their
strong voices.

San Diego Jewish Women's Institute

The Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education and Growth ... Teshuvah in San Diego, which offers Jewish women in that city a program of classes, workshops, lectures and vocational counseling, enters its third year this September.

The Institute works toward goals in four areas: developing programs of Jewish study; enabling women to be creative within Judaism and to assume leadership roles; providing a forum for discussion of the issues women face today; and providing life-direction planning through vocational counseling and other projects. The Institute gives Jewish women the opportunity to develop their individuality as women and to connect with their Jewish roots, as symbolized by the use of the word *teshuvah*, meaning return, in the Institute's name.

Irene Fine, a doctoral candidate in Jewish studies, is co-founder and co-director of the Institute. In a recent interview, she recalled her frustration with the position of women in Judaism.

Her protest and determination took shape in the idea of an educational institute especially for Jewish women. Fine received support for the project from the Jewish Community Center, and its staff members became involved with the Institute. The Institute is now an independent, non-profit organization supporting itself from tuition fees, ticket sales and private donations.

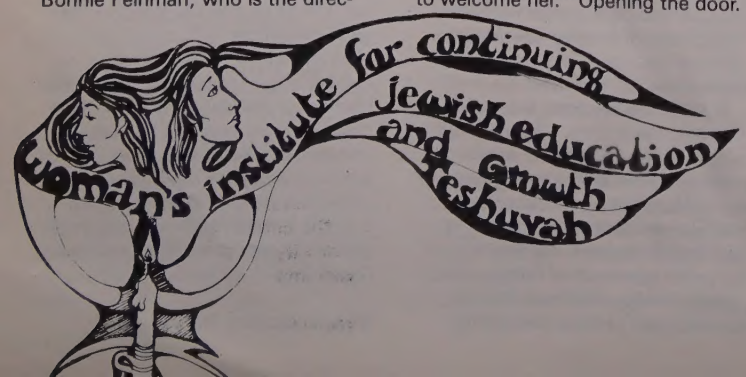
Among the courses taught at the Institute have been "World of our Mothers," which emphasized female family history; "A Women's Eye View of Jewish Fairy Tales," during which women wrote modern versions of *midrashim* (legends) which Fine compiled; and Jewish history. A class entitled "Mothers, Daughters, Sisters and Jewish Rites of Passage" led to the writing and celebration of a new women's ceremony marking the mid-life rite of passage.

A widely acclaimed highlight of the Institute's Jewish Studies program has been its Shabbat Afternoon series of study sessions, each led by a prominent scholar and concluding with Havdallah and refreshments.

The Institute's co-director is Bonnie Feinman, who is the director of its Personal Growth and Life Directions Program. Feinman, who has an M.A. in Counseling Education, offers individualized vocational counseling on a sliding scale fee and teaches classes in peer counseling, decision making, problem solving, and other aspects of creative life planning.

The Jewish Woman's Network organized at the beginning of the Institute's second year is a resource group for the Institute and has been instrumental in creating a larger support group. The goal is a growing network of woman power in the San Diego Jewish community—potentially a model for other communities.

Helen Gotkowitz



San Diego Seder

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Ramses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children." (Ex. 12:37) The Exodus: the men were counted; the children were mentioned. But where were the women? About 3,000 years later, 25 women gather together at a seder held by the San Diego Jewish Women's Institute to honor those women and to search out the lost names and the legacy not only of the women who played a part in the Exodus, but also those of who passed on the legends about them.

Twenty-five women lift their glasses of wine, saying, "Blessings to our foremothers," asking four questions and giving four answers about the bitter story of women and the sweet searching together through history to discover their legacy. Later in the evening, they lift their glasses in a toast to the author of the *hagada*, Arlene Saidman.

Women's role in the Exodus is examined. A recounting of the story of Hebrew midwives' disobeying the Pharaoh and not killing the first-born male Jewish children. The story of the Pharaoh's daughter adopting Moses, a Hebrew child. Listening as the inheritance of Miriam is recounted. Acknowledging, honoring Miriam, a leader.

The seder service draws to a close. "We are told that Miriam, the prophet, visits every house where a women's seder is being held." Irene Fine, Director of the Women's Institute, is saying, "We open the door to welcome her." Opening the door.

Larry Fine

Women at the San Diego seder. Said one woman: "It's up to us to gai freedom and not stay slaves ...." Irene Fine, Institute founder, is second from

Opening the circle. Ghosts of women from over 3,000 years flushing the room with warmth.

And then leaving the door op

Fran Adler

Jewish Women's Studies

The session on "Women and Female Imagery in Jewish Literature" at the 10th annual conference of the Association for Jewish Studies, held last winter in Boston, marked the beginning recognition by Jewish scholars of the phenomenon of womens' studies, and the potential for *Jewish* womens' studies.

The session was organized and chaired by Edward R. Levinson of Gratz College, in Philadelphia.

Nechama Berson, of Princeton University, compared the work of a male and a female Israeli writer in her paper, "Treatment of Female Characters in the Novels of E. Ben Ezer and S. Har Even." She compared the development of female characters in the novels with the stereotypes of women in society, revealing that in Ben Ezer's novels, women are linked with men in destructive and self-destructive ways, while Shulamit Har Even offers her female characters much fuller, more varied and "real" lives.

"Yocheved Bat Miriam: The Religious Vision of a Hebrew Poet," was the research subject of David C. Jacobson of the University of Michigan. He illuminated the texts with comments on Bat Miriam's personal struggles as a secular Jew seeking an intimate God, and as a Jewish woman unable to find in traditional imagery an expression for her yearnings.

With the paper presented by Norma Fain Pratt of Mt. San Antonio College on "Culture and Politics: Yiddish Women Writers, 1900- 1940," the social and political, as well as personal struggles of a genre of women writers came into view. The fact that the work of most of these immigrant women writers has been neglected—if not completely buried by male editors who disparaged it—echoed the current need for a women's studies session, as well as the potential yet to be tapped.

Eleven syllabi in Jewish Wome Studies are already in use, and have been compiled by Edward Levenson. They can be obtaine for $2.75 by writing him c/o LILITH.

Informal discussion focussed the situation of women in Juda Wanting to be taken seriously i areas traditionally excelled-in b men, the tendency has been fo women to set as their primary g the meeting of traditional stanc which reap prestige. At the sar time, the work of women write and research pertaining to the womens' role of Jewish history yet to be legitimately accepted male-domined Jewish academi

Merle Bachman

Women Professionals

A top official of the National Jewish Community Relations A sory Council has urged membe agencies to actively recruit mo women as both lay leaders and professionals.

Speaking before some 400 d gates at a session of the NJCR four-day plenary meeting in Cincinnati January 22, Albert D Chernin, NJCRAC Executive V Chairman, quoted the findings recent questionnaire distributed its Task Force on Women to th 102 local member agencies in Jewish population areas rangin from under 5,000 to two millio Among them were the followin data on women professionals:

- 45% of full-time professio are women but only 17% executives.
- 65% of women professio earn salaries below $20,0
- Only one woman professi earns $25,000 or more; 23 male professionals are in bracket, including several earn over $40,000.
- Not one male professiona earns less than $10,000; f women do.

Reena Sigman Friedman

ıdership Skills minar

ree yars ago, the Milwaukee sh Federation Women's ion passed a resolution, subse- tly accepted by the Executive mittee of the Federation, cal- for increased participation of en in top policy and decision- ng roles in all aspects of sh community life. As a result, Milwaukee Federation ap- ted its first woman planning tor, and increasing numbers of en began to be elected or ap- ted to the Federation board and ommittees, and to the boards nstituent agencies.

though women attended meet- regularly, it soon became rent that the men were still making the decisions. Many women who had functioned effectively in women's organizations contributed little when placed in these new settings. If they spoke at all, it was to ask questions for their own information so that they could better interpret the work of the agency to others rather than to ask the kind of question or make the kind of statement that would move the discussion towards a decision.

It became apparent that they also lacked certain executive skills that people in business or the professions acquire with experience.

To help correct this situation, the Women's Division set up a seven-session pilot Leadership Skills Seminar for women who hold leadership positions in the Jewish community: members of the board of directors of the Women's Division and the Federation, all Jewish agencies and all the synagogues.

The seminar covered such areas as financial management (balance sheets, monthly financial statements, budgets and the "language of finance"), the legal responsibility of boards, and personnel administration (union contracts, use of job descriptions, evaluations, salary ranges, hiring and firing).

Recognizing the value of the project, the Council of Jewish Federation and Welfare Funds, at its General Assembly last fall, gave the 1978 Shroder Award for "Intermediate Cities" to the Women's Division of Milwaukee Jewish Federation for its Leadership Seminar.

Betty Lieberman

nall number of Falashas have settled in Israel, where Avram Yerday (left) *heads community. Those who remain in Ethiopia suffer starvation and terror.*

groms in Ethiopia

ne Falashas (Beta Israel) of opia are "on the verge of a k Holocaust," according to rts and spokespeople coming of the war-torn African country. ne Falashas have lived for cen- s in small, isolated villages in highland country of northwest opia, earning their living from ing and craftwork. Having bered 250,000 in the 19th cen- the Falashas are down to ut 28,000 at present.

ney are presently caught in the dle of two warring Ethiopian l armies, both of which oppose Provisional Military Government.

ne left-wing EPRP has vowed ipe out the entire tribe because Falashas have refused to join n. The right-wing EDU, led by ives of the deposed ruler Haile ssie, has been waging a brutal against the Falashas.

wo thousand Falashas have killed by the two rebel armies, rding to recent reports. Seven sand more have been forced ee their homes and become gees. They are starving on the outskirts of Gondar.

Louis Peres reported in *The New Republic* (Feb. 24, 1979) that when the EDU captured a Falasha village recently, the soldiers raped the women and cut off their breasts, arms and hands. Many women and men were taken away in chains and sold in the still-thriving slave trade. The men remaining in the village were castrated.

Dr. Graenum Berger, who has chaired the American Association for Ethiopian Jews since 1975, said in a recent interview that the solution to the Falasha problem "lies in emigration to Israel." The fact that only 300 Falashas are currently living in Israel—a statistic Berger calls a "scandal"—reflects, he said, not only the great difficulties Falashas face in leaving the country but "perhaps in greater measure, the intolerable obstacles placed before those who seek to enter Israel."

Other activists on behalf of the Falashas have charged that Israel has made no special effort to save the tribe, but stressed that it must do so now, before it is too late.

Eddi Wolk

Protest CCAR Arizona Convention

The 90th annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the organization of Reform rabbis in the United States and Canada, was held last March in Phoenix despite objections by many members to holding the convention in Arizona, a state that had voted down the Equal Rights Amendment.

Rabbi Judea B. Miller of Temple B'rith Kodesh in Rochester, New York, called for a general boycott a few weeks before the convention. "Every other organization of Reform Judaism has decided to reschedule its national convention out of states that have so far refused to support the Equal Rights Amendment .... " he said. "This is not said in judgment of colleagues who voted to keep the convention in Phoenix because they feared a possible $20,000 penalty to the (CCAR). That would have come to less than $20 per member for the sake of principle."

Miller was referring to the fact that in order to withdraw from its contract with the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Phoenix, the CCAR would have had to pay a cancellation fee of $20,000. Some months before the convention, CCAR members rejected, in a mail ballot, the option of paying the fee and relocating the convention, by 85% to 15%.

According to Rabbi Elliot Stevens, Administrative Secretary of the CCAR, the contract with the hotel was signed some four years ago, before any doubts had been raised regarding the holding of a convention in an unratified state.

"Engaging in such a secondary boycott would have been an immoral intrusion into the democratic process," said Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser, Executive Vice President of the CCAR, "as well as an indiscriminate injustice against the workers of the hotel and the hotel itself, an equal opportunity employer. This is not even to mention the question of business ethics, for which the CCAR is also on record."

Painting by June Blum

Oil of "Betty Friedan as Prophet"

Six women rabbis, who ultimately decided to attend the convention, expressed their disappointment that "the Conference has not chosen to manifest its stated support for ERA through the boycott of non-ratified states ...."

The six signatories of this statement were Rabbis Sally Priesand; Karen Fox, of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues; Laura Geller, Director of Hillel at the University of Southern California; Rosalind Gold, of Temple B'rith Kodesh in Rochester; Myra Seifer, of Temple Sinai in New Orleans; and Deborah Prinz, of the Central Synagogue in New York City.

The women rabbis organized a caucus at the convention at which Betty Friedan stressed that lobbying efforts on behalf of ERA should be a priority of American Jews. "The enemy of the Jews and the enemy of women are one and the same enemies .... This despotism (of extreme right-wing groups) is very bad for the Jews and it's very bad for women."

Prior to the convention, Rabbi Ely Pilchik, President of the CCAR, had asserted that it "will have as a major objective a thundering call on the State of Arizona to ratify the ERA and that is why we are going to Phoenix .... This call for ERA in several effective tones will be heard around the nation."

The rabbis visited with state senators and representatives in order to make their positions on ERA known to the legislators. "From a practical point of view," Rabbi Stevens said, "the visit to the Legislature had little effect since the amendment was defeated once again just prior to the convention, but the national publicity which the rally attracted was important."

Reena Sigman Friedman

Our Soviet Sisters

Underground Kindergarten

The Jewish kindergarten started by the Moscow Women's Committee is expected to open again this fall. During the past year, some dozen young children of Refuseniks and those who have not yet applied to leave the Soviet Union attended the unofficial school in a rambling wooden house outside Moscow.

Joshua Rubenstein, New England Coordinator for Amnesty International, observed on his way to the school, that parents were startled to hear their children start to sing Hebrew songs on the subway. Soviet Jews are taught to hide their Jewish origins, but, Rubenstein observed, "By organizing a kindergarten, they knew they were initiating a process they could not control."

The adults have been learning Jewish history and traditions with their children. Rubenstein reports that on Jewish holidays such as Purim and Chanukah, as many as 70 children may attend the kindergarten. (*Source:* Matchbox)

Year of the Child

In response to the United Nations' designating 1979 as The Year of the Child, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry and Union of Councils for Soviet Jews are calling attention to the suffering of children of Prisoners of Conscience and Refuseniks.

The Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry has compiled a list of 200 children, including address, age and birthday, for American children to write to. The list is available from SSSJ at 200 West 72 St., Suites 30-31, New York, NY 10023.

Ida Nudel in Siberia

Ida Nudel has survived a year in prison in an all-male barracks in the village of Krivosheyno in Siberia. Nudel, 48 and in poor health, was sentenced to four years in this Siberian prison after seven years of challenging the Soviet treatment of Jewish political prisoners.

Nudel had become known as the "guardian angel," keeping track of exiled Prisoners of Conscience,

In Israel, "I WIN," (Israeli Women for Ida Nudel) has been working through the Dutch foreign ministry to get medical attention for Nudel.

In the U.S., Women for Ida Nudel (WIN) is appealing to elected women officials to press for Nudel's release. The group is chaired by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder (D-Colorado). Its national coordinator is Lynn Singer. WIN is located at 91 North Franklin St., Hempstead, NY 11550.

Amy Stone

Amnesty International staffer Joshua Rubenstein teaches havdalah *(Shabbat farewell) ceremony at the underground kindergarten. He and Richard Sobol, who took the picture, have completed a book about Soviet Jewish life.*

Richard Sobol / Black Star

Call for Correspondents

LILITH continues to accept applications for the position of local correspondent.

To apply, please send a resume and two samples of your work, preferably published, to:

Lilith Magazine
250 W. 57 St. Rm. 1328C
New York, NY 10019

No Longer Among Us

Sara Feder-Keyfitz (January 8) age 80. Keyfitz was a former president of the Pioneer Women (1951-1955), a prominent sociologist, and an advocate of women's rights.

Sara Herzog (January 13) age 82. Herzog was the founder and president of the National Religious Women's Organization in Israel. She chaired the Ezrat Nashim Mental Hospital in Jerusalem, and numerous other committees devoted to work for disadvantaged families and delinquent youths.

Celia Adler Forman (April 25) age 89. Forman was the "first lady of Yiddish theater." In 1918, she helped to open the first Yiddish Art Theater in New York, and appeared in many Yiddish productions. She wrote the two-volume "The Yiddish Theater in America."

Judith Wax (May 25), age 47. Author of *Starting in the Middle,* autobiography of her struggle to become a writer in mid-life, and shorter pieces, including a moving account of how she and her husband Sheldon (who died with her in the same plane crash) coped with their son's religious struggles.

Mazel Tov

Ordained as Rabbis

Reconstructionist: **Linda Holtzman** of Philadelphia; and **Gail S. Shuster-Bouslika** of Evanston, Il., the first Reconstructionist woman rabbi to settle in Israel. She is teaching in the Jerusalem Pedagogic Center.

Reform: **Michal Bourne** of Mt. Kisco, NY; **Ellen Dreyfuss,** Chicago; **Vicki Lee Hollander,** Beechwood, OH; **Jan Kaufman,** Baltimore; **Beverly Lerner,** Shawnee Mission, Kansas; **Beverly Magidson,** Detroit; **Janet Ross,** Tarzana, CA; **Sheila Russian,** Cranston, RI; and **Bonnie Steinberg,** Belmont, MA.

In the community

Vivian R. Rabineau, campaign director of the Washington, D.C. U.J.A.-Federation.

Dorothy Eisenberg, elected president of the Combined Jewish Appeal, Las Vegas.

F. Altman, elected to her second term as president of the Jewish Federation of Southern Illinois.

Francine Loeb, chairperson of th 1979 campaign of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle.

S. Deifik elected president of the Jewish Federation of Fort Worth.

Roberta Shiffman, executive director of the North American Jewish Students Appeal, New York.

Dr. Nancy L. Caroline, formerly faculty member of the University Pittsburgh Medical School, appointed medical director of Mage David Adom in Israel.

Riki Englander Kosut, elected president of the American Jewish Public Relations Society

Vida Goldgar, editor and publish of the *Southern Israelite,* Atlanta.

Maureen Schild, appointed Leg Associate in the American Jewish Committee's Legal Division.

Jenny Brouse, elected president of the Tulsa Jewish Community Council.

Marian Shifman, elected president of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit.

Linda May, president of the Hou ton Chapter of the American Jewish Committee.

Joanne Jahr, appointed Nationa Program Coordinator for ARZA— the Association of Reform Zionist of America.

Laura Movschine, elected co-president of Americans for Progressive Israel-Hashomer Hatzair.

Sylvia Brailove, elected presider of the Jewish Federation of Centr New Jersey.

Leona Chanin (New York), **Joa Mendelson** (Long Island), **Linda Miller** (Baltimore), **Bernice Tannenbaum** (New York), elect to the Board of Directors of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Awards and Honors

Lili Berger of France awarded th Fernando Jeno Literary Prize by t Cultural Commission of the Centr Jewish Committee of Mexico.

Celia S. Heller's book *On The Edge of Destruction* won the Jew ish Book Council's National Jewis Book Award in Jewish history.

Toba Korenblum of Toronto, recipient of a Boris Smolar Award for Excellence in American Jewis Journalism, Best Features Category.

Syliva Wene, considered the bes woman bowler, inducted in the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame locat at Israel's Wingate Institute.

Sondra Gotlieb of Ottawa, recip ent of 1979 Leacock Award for humor for her autobiographical book, *True Confessions.*

A special mazel tov to **Simone Veil,** formerly French Minister of Health, for her election as Preside of the European Parliament.

Compiled by Ethel C. Fenig an Bonnie Epstein

(Cont'd. on Page 42)

The Politics of Women's Ordination

by Reena Sigman Friedman

Eve Kessler

What does the contemporary rabbi do
n a woman is not capable of doing?"
he question was posed by Dr. Sarah Lie-
an, a religious school principal in
ingham, Massachusetts, as part of her testi-
y before the Commission for the Study of
Ordination of Women as Rabbis. The Com-
on was established some two years ago in
to review this issue and present its recom-
lations to policy makers within the Conser-
e movement. At the present time, the issue
ns unresolved.

Sigman Friedman is News Editor of LILITH, *a freelance writer whose work has appeared in s Jewish newspapers and magazines. She is also a l candidate in American Jewish History at bia University.*

otes in this article, unless otherwise indicated, from interviews conducted by the author over months in the Spring 1979. Excerpts from ny at Commission hearings around the country selected from transcripts of these hearings, hed by Eddi Wolk. Reporter for the Rabbinical bly convention in Los Angeles was Hope Chaikin Excerpts of this article appeared in the May 1979 Israel Horizons.

Dr. Lieberman's question was a simple one; yet it has ignited sparks in the dimly lit corridors of the Jewish Theological Seminary, sparks which disturb the scholarly tranquility of this "fountainhead of Conservative Judaism." For the first time in the history of the Conservative movement, the Seminary's scholars and administrators have been called upon to make a major policy statement, one which will have profound implications for the future of the movement itself, for Jewish women and for American Jewry as a whole.

In recent years, the question of ordination for women has been the subject of heated debate among Conservative Jews. Opponents fear that enabling women to enter the rabbinate will give rise to real and symbolic departures from Jewish tradition, encourage defections and severely weaken the movement. For others, the question is not *whether*, but *when*. They maintain that, strictly speaking, there are no halachic (Jewish legal) barriers to women's ordination, that opening the rabbinate to women has become an ethical imperative and that Jewish law must respond to changing times and needs.

In just a few months, a vote will be taken by the faculty members comprising the Seminary "Senate." They are currently deliberating the issue, acting upon recommendations made by the Commission for the Study of the Ordination of Women As Rabbis.

Although the final vote was originally scheduled for May 30th, it has now been officially postponed until January 1980. The postponement was first announced in an April 27th letter written by Dr. Gerson Cohen, Chancellor of the Seminary, to members of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international organization of Conservative rabbis.

Each delay places another obstacle in the way of those women who seek to serve their communities—in the words of the diploma received by all JTS Rabbinical School graduates—as "rabbis, teachers and preachers in Israel."

The approximately 40 women who have applied to the Seminary Rabbinical School since 1972 are anxiously awaiting the Senate's decision. While some have entered other professions, a significant number are pursuing their rabbinical studies at Reform or Reconstructionist institutions. These women, along with others who are seeking private ordination from individual Conservative rabbis, have expressed their hopes of some day serving a Conservative congregation.

Judith Hauptman is Instructor in Talmud at the Seminary and one of the founders of Ezrat Nashim, the Jewish feminist group that in 1971 sparked the present-day campaign for women's ritual equality within the Conservative movement. She reported that a number of other young women, many of them students in the Seminary's various graduate programs, are also waiting in the wings, hoping to apply the Rabbinical School courses that they have already taken toward a rabbinical degree.

The Commission on the Ordination of Women was established in September 1977 by Chancellor Cohen, upon the recommendation of the Rabbinical Assembly. It was an interdisciplinary advisory body charged with exploring "all aspects of the role of women as spiritual leaders in the Conservative movement." The RA was required to receive the Commission's report at the end of an allotted time period.

During the two years of its existence, the Commission's 14 members studied the question, drawing upon a wealth of accumulated data, including public-opinion surveys and written statements received from RA members throughout the country. In addition, eight public hearings were conducted by the Commission in major American and Canadian cities in order to elicit the views of Conservative congregants on this critical issue.

After many long hours of deliberation, the Commission's final report was presented by Dr. Cohen to delegates attending the annual RA convention, held last January 28 through February 1 in Los Angeles. By a vote of 11 to three, the Commission members recommended that "qualified women be ordained as rabbis within the Conservative movement."

They proposed further that "this revision of policy be accomplished as quickly as possible, preferably so as to allow applications from women for the academic year beginning in September 1979;" that the Seminary take steps to set up appropriate apparatuses for the recruitment, orientation and, eventually, career placement of female rabbinical students; and that an educational program be launched within the Conservative movement "so as to ensure as smooth and as harmonious an adjustment to the new policy as possible."

The three Commission members endorsing the Minority Opinion concluded that "appropriate roles [should] be created for Jewish women short of ordination so that their commitment and talents may be a source of blessing and not of unnecessary controversy."

The 29-page report, written by Rabbi Gordon Tucker, Assistant to the Chancellor, and delivered by Dr. Cohen in an historic address on Tuesday evening, January 30th, was enthusiastically received by the approximately 500 RA members attending the convention. Applause filled the large room as Cohen concluded, having outlined his own intellectual journey from skepticism to "passionate" support of the ordination of women as rabbis. This conclusion, he noted, was informed by his understanding that "development has been the guiding principle of Jewish history since ancient times."

Despite widespread praise for Cohen's eloquent presentation, the convention delegates remained true to what some regarded as their original mandate. Following lengthy and impassioned debate at the critical Wednesday morning session, some 240 delegates turned aside two propositions—both of which strongly urged the Seminary faculty to adopt the Commission's recommendations without delay—in favor of a much milder resolution which essentially committed the RA to a "hands-off" policy prior to the Seminary vote.

The resolution, adopted by a vote of 127 to 109, commended Cohen and the Commission members for their work, but also read, in part:

> *Be it hereby resolved that the RA will take no action on the question of the ordination of women or on the Commission recommendation prior to the study of the report by the full membership and the study, analysis and decision of the Seminary faculty on the recommendation.*

The passage of this resolution, according to informed sources, came as a surprise to many who had anticipated that, with a disproportionate number of the delegates coming from the traditionally liberal West Coast states, the convention would be much more assertive in implementing the Commission's findings. A number of those who oppose women's ordination regard the RA move as evidence of heightened sympathy for the traditionalist point of view within that volatile body.

It should be noted, however, that only a little over half of the Convention delegates were present at the Wednesday morning session and that the resolution was adopted by a very slim margin.

Moreover, as was pointed out by several observers, the group voting in the resolution was, in fact, a "complicated coalition," including those who genuinely opposed women's ordination; those who objected to what they regarded as attempts by the RA "establishment" to manipulate their decision; those who were dissatisfied with the Commission report's brevity and its omission of source materials; and, finally, those who, complying with the tacit understanding that one arm of the Conservative movement may not unduly influence another, wished to reserve action until after the Seminary vote. (See "Gentlemen's Agreement At the Seminary," by Amy Stone, *Lilith* #3).

That this "gentlemen's agreement" was uppermost in many delegates' minds, was confirmed by Dr. Seymour Siegel, Professor of Theology and Ethics at the Seminary, Chairman of the RA Committee on Jewish Law and Standards and a long-standing advocate of women's ordination. Interviewed in Los Angeles by Rabbi Mark Golub of the New York radio program "L'Chayim," Siegel said:

> *I personally expected the RA to issue a ringing endorsement of the Chancellor's report and his strong supporting statement, but there is some logic to those who believe that the faculty has the decision, and therefore it would be presumptuous to make any kind of statement that would be interpreted as pressure upon the faculty.*

Thus, although during the week following the convention several newspapers hailed the Commission's recommendations as if the decision were a *fait accompli*, the RA has merely returned the ball to the Seminary's court.

This is the first major policy decision to made by the Seminary Senate. The 50-mem body is composed of the institution's Chance and Assistant Chancellors, Deans and Assis Deans, department chairmen, tenured fac members with the rank of Associate Profe or higher and three elected non-tenured inst tors. Formally reorganized in 1974 "to conc all business related to the institution a whole," the Senate meets three or four time year.

The 124 members of the Seminary fac have been invited to prepare position papers the women's ordination issue, to be presen before members of the Senate. According to new schedule outlined by Chancellor Cohe his April 27th letter, all written arguments to be submitted by December 1, so that January the Senate will be able to "dev several days to an in-depth discussion of question and to a resolution of the facul posture."

"I hope that the papers presented will convincing and that there will be a consens as there has been on other issues in the pa said Rabbi Ronald Price, Secretary of Senate. However, most people agree that th will be a vote, by secret ballot, and that it probably be a close one.

Although not all Seminary faculty memb have stated their opinions publicly, it is parent that a person's position on the is cannot be correlated with his or her age, sex academic discipline. Within each departme there are significant numbers of supporters a opponents of women's ordination.

While advocates of women's ordination scattered throughout the faculty, most of leading opponents are concentrated in the mud department. All of the senior, full pro sors in that department are against wome ordination, according to Dr. Israel Franc Professor in Rabbinics, and Chairman of Department of Talmud and Rabbinics, who among them.

In contrast with the generally subdu atmosphere of the Los Angeles convention, Seminary is bristling with controversy and this point, there can be no certainty regard the outcome of the Great Debate.

Those at the Seminary in favor of ordain women generally follow the line of reason developed in the Commission's Majo Report.

Having committed themselves at the ou to making no recommendation which would incompatible with the dictates of *halachah* (body of Jewish law) as it has been interpre by the Conservative movement, 11 of the Commission members concluded that "ther no direct halachic objection to the acts training and ordaining a woman to be a rab preacher and teacher in Israel."

The rabbinate as we know it today, they plain, is a relatively recent innovation, de oped in response to the changing needs of Jewish community. Therefore, one can necessarily look to traditional rabbinic texts

functions.

Supporters maintain, as well, that a decision ordain women would be thoroughly consis- t with previous rulings by the influential RA mmittee on Jewish Law and Standards, the nservative movement's major lawmaking dy, concerning the rights of women to eive *aliyot* (recite the blessing over the Torah) 955), be counted in a *minyan* (the traditional ayer quorum) (1973), and serve as witnesses ritual matters (minority opinion, 1974).

In the estimation of Rabbi Stephen Lerner, the Jewish Community Center of West mpstead, New York, a prominent supporter women's ordination, these rulings reflect the t that "there has been a steady concern for

obligation to the young women reared within their congregations and religious schools, the proponents' argument continues, but the movement stands to benefit from the input of female spiritual leaders. At a time when qualified rabbis are in short supply, supporters urge the Conservative leadership to tap the vast potential of its young women as a means toward the amplification and betterment of American Jewish life. At a time when the alienation of Jewish youth is a major concern, they declare that the Conservative leadership cannot afford to take the risk of denying such opportunities to fully one-half of young Jews.

Although supporters within the faculty agree that the issue is complex and problematic, they are convinced that a positive decision by

"How can we in good conscience say to our Jewish women: It matters not what new dimensions are open to you in the secular world—the holy dimension is reserved to men alone."

omen within the Conservative movement, for eir education, for their participation in the nagogue and in all aspects of religious life."

More importantly, proponents assert that e halachic prohibitions against women's rving as leaders of public worship and as itnesses in ritual matters, commonly cited as e major legal obstacles to women's ordination, e not relevant to the issue at hand, since these e "non-essential" functions of the modern bbinate. Even halachic purists who do not ecessarily accept the manner in which the Law ommittee has resolved such questions would gree that today's rabbi is rarely called upon to rve in these capacities.

Moreover, supporters argue that a compel- ng case could be made, on ethical grounds, for e ordination of women. Chief among these nsiderations is the right of all people, regard- ss of sex, to realize their potentials to the full, both the religious and secular spheres. Said arlan Umansky, of Cliffside, New Jersey, one those testifying at the New York hearings:

"How can we in all conscience say to our wish women: It matters not what new dimen- ons are open to you in the secular world—the oly dimension is reserved to men alone."

Barbara Bundt, who testified at the Com- ission hearing in Minneapolis, also voiced this ntiment:

My fourth child is a gifted person who loves synagogue and Talmud Torah school. This child burns with Torah. This child wants to be a rabbi. But she is only nine years old and does not yet realize that women cannot be rabbis. She does not yet realize the moral inconsistencies in Judaism. How much longer must women of ambition and talent seek career satisfaction in only the secular world?

Ms. Bundt was one of many parents whose ppearance at the public hearings had a pro- ound impact upon the Commission members. peaking of the academic achievements and mbitions of their daughters, these parents aintained that it was manifestly unjust for the onservative movement to educate young girls qually with boys, only to make a sharp and njustifiable distinction between the sexes upon e threshold of rabbinical training.

Conservative leaders not only have an

the Seminary would be indicative of growth and vitality within the movement. As Rabbi David Wolf Silverman, Associate Professor in Philosophies of Judaism at the Seminary put it, in his testimony before the Commission:

I believe that women's entrance to the ordination process can infuse new energy, new youth, new problems, new needs which can help transform what to me is becoming a moribundly successful movement.

Opponents of women's ordination are generally quick to point out that their position does not reflect a bias against women or against feminism. "This is not merely an issue of women's rights," said one vocal opponent on the faculty, who asked not to be named. He and others observed that, as the Commission report stated, "there is still a wide range of considerations of which account must be taken. These considerations include some peculiar to the rabbinate, to Jewish practice in general and to Conservative Judaism in particular."

First and foremost, opponents argue, as did Rabbi David Novak of Congregation Beth El in Norfolk, Virginia before the Commission hearings in Washington, D.C., that

The rabbinate as a distinct and necessary institution in Jewish life is necessarily structured by the halachah. *To admit women into the rabbinate as it has been traditionally defined is to destroy the very foundation which makes the rabbinate possible.*

Opponents go on to explain, in the words of the Minority Report:

"You cannot, within the present climate of the Conservative movement, ordain women and expect that they will not at some point infringe on these halachic restrictions (that is, their inability to be counted in a *minyan*, receive an *aliyah*, lead prayer services and act as a witness or judge) in the performance of their rabbinical duties."

A faculty pronouncement in favor of women's ordination, opponents contend, even if it could be justified on strictly halachic grounds, would be regarded by Jews both within and outside the Conservative movement as a symbolic break with tradition. External symbolic factors, they argue, must be taken most seriously in a movement committed to maintaining the fabric of traditional Judaism.

For Rabbi David Feldman, of the Bay Ridge Jewish Center in Brooklyn, for example, symbolic concerns are preeminent. Speaking on the radio program "L'Chayim," last February 11, Feldman deemphasized the role of halachic considerations in this controversy and added:

My real concern is that women's ordination so radically alters the character of the synagogue and of the rabbinate as to be a sea change, depriving it of its traditional character for a very small good, a very small accomplishment.

For many the very image of a woman in the pulpit is anathema. During the same radio broadcast, Feldman said:

We . . . know that the history of Judaism is the history of anti-Canaanite idolatry and the Canaanite idolatry featured a woman priestess and, from the standpoint of the Bible, this leads to immorality and other kinds of things.

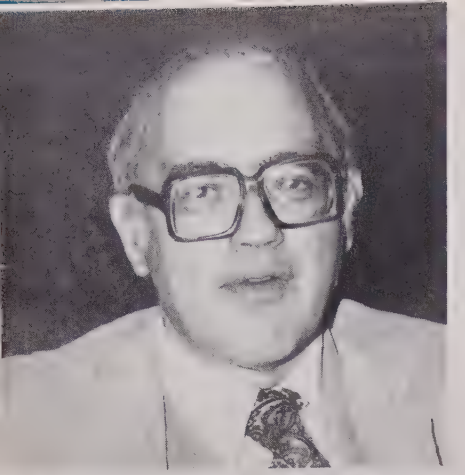
Opponents contend that, were the Seminary to make such a radical departure from tradition, it would only reinforce the belief, widely held by Orthodox leaders, that Conservative Judaism is not an authentic halachic movement. The less Conservative Jews are perceived as adhering to traditional practices, the more likely they are to be identified with the Reform movement. As Professor Francus noted, the question of ordination for women has become the "symbolic dividing line" between Conservatism and Reform, just as the *mechitzah* (partition between men and women in the synagogue) issue was used to distinguish between Orthodoxy and Conservatism.

The anticipated reponse of both Orthodox and secularist groups in Israel is of particular concern to opponents of women's ordination. Bruce Ginsburg, a recent graduate of the Seminary Rabbinical School and a vocal opponent of women's ordination within the student body, noted that such a decision would only "confirm the suspicions of Orthodox Israelis that the Conservative movement acts outside *halachah*."

Opponents also warn that a decision to admit women to the rabbinate would hamper ongoing efforts to firmly establish the Conservative movement in Israel. They argue that many secularists who are now beginning to turn to Conservatism as an authentic Judaism with an attractive progressive style, would be extremely disillusioned were the Seminary to take this step.

Finally, it has been claimed that this decision would mark the first time that the Seminary, as the Conservative movement's central academic institution, has entered the arena of halachic decision making. Many fear that such a move might alienate right-wing minorities within the movement by denying them the right to have their "commitment to conscience respected." Opponents maintain that, while such individuals could, in the past, dissociate themselves from rulings of the RA Law Committee, they would be bound by a Seminary decision which could become the standard for the movement. As Professor Francus put it:

"There is a fundamental difference between action taken by the Law Committee and the



"The modification of halacha in order to approach a more perfect ethical state has always been a part of the tradition in its creative eras. It has not always been invoked because those who made the tradition were afraid."
Seymour Siegel

"Halachically speaking, counting women in the minyan is more serious [than women's ordination]. Not one member of the RA resigned.... In all these years that I've been here, there have been many turbulent debates. But turbulence is the sign of a lively organization."
Wolfe Kelman

Senate. When the Law Committee takes an action, there is an option open. Their ruling is not a reality until the congregations decide whether or not to adopt it. But, if the Seminary decides to ordain women, this is already a reality, in the minds of Conservative rabbis and congregants alike." Francus explained that a Seminary decision to ordain women would "undermine" the position of traditionalist rabbis in relation to their own congregations.

One cannot understand the complexity and intensity of this debate without recognizing that much more than the women's ordination issue is at stake. The arguments of supporters and opponents alike touch upon fundamental questions at the very core of Conservative Judaism.

The leadership of the Conservative movement has always striven to preserve traditional laws and practices in all areas of Jewish life. At the same time, interpreters of *halachah* within the Conservative movement recognize the need for development in Jewish history and are prepared to accept subtle changes in Jewish law over time.

Above all, the prolonged debate over women's ordination exemplifies this characteristic Conservative attempt to strike a delicate balance between tradition and change. A person's stand on this issue reflects the extent to which he or she is willing to seek modifications in the code of behavior prescribed by the Torah and Talmud, and amended in the Responsa, in response to changing social conditions.

In the opinion of Professor Seymour Siegel, "if any halachic norm results in some unethical outcome, then it is incumbent upon the interpreters of Jewish law to modify that law so that it is in conformity with fairness and ethics." He maintains that Jewish law, particularly as it has been understood within the Conservative movement, must not become fossilized, but must continue to evolve in different periods of history.

"To tell women that you should and can participate in the Jewish educational enterprise as far as you want, except to this one area, is very hard to explain ethically," Siegel contends. "The modification of *halachah* in order to approach a more perfect ethical state has always been a part of the tradition in its creative eras. It has not always been invoked because those who made the tradition were afraid."

Opponents, on the other hand, have argued, now and in the past, that halachic changes can only be made with the utmost caution. In the case of a conflict between *halachah* and human ethics, they maintain that one must reexamine one's ethics before attempting to challenge that which represents the word of God.

In the opinion of Professor Francus, "Equality is important and always has been, but I'm not obsessed with equality, because if we are going to change *halachah* or traditions whenever they conflict with current social ethics, this is tantamount to abolishing *halachah*. Unlike Reform, Conservative Judaism adheres to *halachah*."

Clearly, the arguments advanced by individuals on both sides of the women's ordination debate reflect their proponents' personal conceptions of the Conservative movement, as it has been formulated in response to both Orthodoxy and Reform.

Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, Executive Director of the RA and Adjunct Assistant Professor in Jewish History at the Seminary, and other advocates of women's ordination within both the Seminary and the RA, argue that nothing Conservative Jews will ever do will fully legitimate them in the eyes of their Orthodox colleagues; therefore, women's ordination can hardly be regarded as the decisive issue. In particular, Kelman pointed out that, at the present time, Conservative rituals and documents are not recognized by the Orthodox establishment in Israel anyway. A Senate vote in favor of women's ordination would, in his view, have little impact upon the Conservative movement's position in Israel.

According to Kelman and others, at the heart of opponents' concern regarding the possible reaction of Orthodox leaders to a Seminary decision in favor of women's ordination is the fact that some members of both the Seminary faculty and the RA regard their movement as, in Kelman's words, a "decorous wing of Orthodoxy." That is, they identify with the traditionalist Orthodox community in every sense but the fact that they engage in "critical scholarship" of rabbinic texts at the Seminary, a manner of study and instruction which is generally frowned upon by Orthodox institutions. As Kelman summed up:

"That's what it gets down to. It's an identity. Are we a Conservative movement with our own ideology, which believes in tradition and change and all the other things that we say we do, or are we just a decorous wing of Orthodoxy?"

Many opponents, however, maintain that they are by no means Orthodox in their orientations. Israel Francus said that he considers himself a Conservative Jew. "I don't condemn people because they observe less than I do," he said. "[By the same token] they cannot label me Orthodox."

What those who express concern about the Conservative movement's increasing resemblance to Reform are really saying is that they do not want to appear to be yielding to popular pressures in making so momentous a decision. Said Professor Francus:

"I am sorry. We can't go by the rank-and-file as leaders of Judaism. There is a good chance, if we do so, that we could do away with Kashrut and Shabbat. The members of the medical profession don't go to the rank-and-file to make medical decisions. In my opinion, the rank-and-file is not now clamoring for women rabbis."

Yet, many supporters and opponents of women's ordination feel that public opinion on this issue must be taken most seriously by decision makers at the Seminary. Individuals on both sides of the debate repeatedly cite popularist considerations.

The results of a survey of 14 selected con-

gations conducted over the past two years the Commission by Yankelovich, Skelly and nite, the highly respected market research n, shed some light upon public sentiment th regard to the women's ordination estion. Dr. Cohen, addressing the Los ngeles convention, reported that, according to e survey, "in absolute numbers, a significant jority of the laity of the Conservative move- nt are ready and willing to accept an actively acticing female rabbi."

The study does indicate, as well, that some nservative congregants are sufficiently op- sed to women's ordination that they would ve their congregations if a woman rabbi was ed. (A more extensive public opinion survey s recently been undertaken by a group work- g with Dr. Charles Liebman, Visiting Profes- of American Jewish History and Sociology Religion at the Seminary, the results of which ll be tabulated for the Senate's review).

It seems clear, then, that the nation's nservative Jews are, for the most part, epared to see women in the pulpit. As the mmission report states, "The overwhelming jority of those who chose to testify at these etings (the public hearings) strongly favored e ordination of women." Conservative ngregations in which women have served in binical or quasi-rabbinical capacities have pressed satisfaction with the results.

Opponents within the Seminary and the A repeatedly point out that even the female aduates of Reform and Reconstructionist rab- nical seminaries have generally not been hired congregations as their senior rabbis, but ther as associate or assistant spiritual leaders.

Advocates of women's ordination acknowl- ge that, initially, some congregants may be notionally unprepared for the image of a man in the pulpit. They maintain, however, at, as people become more accustomed to eing women in rabbinic roles, they are much s likely to regard this as a radical departure m tradition, just as many more Conservative ngregations have come to accept the greater rticipation of women in all aspects of the nagogue service.

Finally, supporters are convinced that a ell-organized "educational" campaign conduc- d within Conservative congregations will go to assure those who are still skeptical that is move does not constitute an arbitrary break ith *halachah*, but rather has been arrived at by eans of traditional interpretive methods.

Rabbi Wolfe Kelman sees the halachic rriers to women's ordination, cited so often opponents, as merely a "red herring," since bbis today are rarely required to serve as ther witnesses or leaders in public worship.

Yet, individuals on both sides of the debate ree that it would be unfair to ordain women ly to impose restrictions upon their perfor- ance of rabbinical duties. There is a general nse among supporters and opponents alike at the Commission report cleverly sidestepped is issue in its attempt to distinguish between ssential" and "nonessential" roles of the odern rabbi.

Judith Hauptman and Seymour Siegel are prepared to grapple with this problem. They feel that, halachically speaking, the correct procedure would be to firmly resolve the questions of *edut* (witnessing) and *shaliach tzibur* (representative of the congregation) prior to making a decision on ordination. This would ensure that the women who are ultimately ordained would be full-fledged rabbis.

Steps are already being taken toward this end. In 1974, a substantial minority of the RA Law Committee voted to enable women to serve as witnesses which, according to the Committee's by-laws, makes this a legitimate option for Conservative Jews. Moreover, on March 2, 1979, the Law Committee took up discussion of a new *takkanah* (ordinance) that would obligate women equally with men in the performance of positive time-bound commandments. This *takkanah* is still under consideration by the Law Committee. The adoption of the proposed ruling would enable women to serve as leaders of public worship, since this is a prime example of a time-bound *mitzvah* from which women have traditionally been exempted.

Both Hauptman and Siegel, however, indicated that they would discourage women rabbis from signing marriage, divorce and conversion documents on the occasions when they might be asked to do so. They make this recommendation only because the signature of what some Jews may regard as an invalid witness could have a harmful effect upon the particular individuals involved. For example, if a writ of divorce is declared invalid, the children of subsequent marriages could be branded illegitimate under Jewish law.

Several people have expressed the concern that, even if the Senate elected to ordain women but to circumscribe their functions in these areas, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the Seminary to enforce its ruling. Hauptman and Siegel expressed disbelief at opponents' contentions that restrictions against women acting as witnesses could not be enforced.

"This whole thing that we can't trust women or we can't rely on them is ridiculous," Hauptman said. "Since I know a lot of these women who want to become rabbis today, if it's true that the Conservative movement doesn't want them to be witnesses, I have full faith in them that they won't be witnesses.... The Seminary has always trusted its men graduates."

Thus, advocates of women's ordination are convinced that the halachic problems related to ordination can be resolved. They argue that a Senate decision on this issue will not mark the first time that the Seminary has entered the arena of halachic decision-making. The Seminary, Seymour Siegel said, has already taken stands on this question by permitting egalitarian services in both its Mathilda Schecter Residence Hall and Camp Ramah, both operated under Seminary auspices.

Siegel concluded that, on the contrary, "The Seminary's involvement will have a positive effect ... because, till now, the bulk of the Conservative movement has seen the senior Talmud faculty as being irrelevant to the halachic issues as they are faced by the Conservative movement. This will be a way for the faculty to re-enter the Conservative movement in a meaningful sense."

The arguments for and against women's ordination heard time and again in Seminary classrooms and offices, on crowded elevators and cafeteria lines, have about them an aura of reasonableness and rationality. Yet, one need only probe the surface to recognize that the women's ordination issue has touched a sensitive nerve in the minds of supporters and opponents alike. Stripped of their legalistic language, the arguments are profoundly emotional and reflect their proponents' reactions to their family backgrounds, educational training and social networks.

If one listens carefully to the arguments of those who oppose women's ordination, it becomes readily apparent that much of what motivates them is fear—fear of the unfamiliar, of hasty change, of the disruption of well established patterns of worship and religious observance. For many people who are convinced that a Seminary decision to ordain women would constitute a serious threat to their conception of Conservative Judaism, this is a very painful debate.

"When the entire Jewish world is moving to the Right should we move to the Left to satisfy the needs of a handful of women and their male supporters?"

Advocates of women's ordination must struggle against not only the chronic insecurities and tensions which plague the Conservative movement, but also against a *Zeitgeist* which appears to be turning against them. The decline of political activism, and the concomitant revival of interest in religion and tradition, have placed new obstacles in the way of the feminist movement in general and the campaign for Jewish women's equality in particular. Thus, Conservative rank-and-file support for women's ordination, which had previously been overwhelming, has now diminished to a certain extent, although supporters remain in the majority.

Time and again, opponents of women's ordination point to the fact that, in both the Jewish and secular worlds, there has been a marked shift to the right. Time and again, they insist that an affirmative vote by the Senate would run contrary to the spirit of the times.

"When the entire Jewish world is moving to the Right," Israel Francus said, "should we move to the Left to satisfy the needs of a handful of women and their male supporters?"

Indicative of the role which this conservative mood plays in the debate over women's ordination is the fact that opponents, such as Bruce Ginsburg, reassert the superiority of the traditional Jewish pattern of sex role differentiation over the more egalitarian model held out

by secular society. He said:

"I believe there should be halachic change when there is an ethical imperative. What we have to determine is whether that ethical imperative is a Jewish ethical imperative or whether it's stemming from some outside source.... The idea that there is no difference in function due to biology is a Western idea.... Judaism stresses that difference of function is not only legitimate, but important and desirable, although every person can reach the same high level of spiritual achievement."

Many opponents fear that the ordination of women, with its premise of sexual equality within Judaism, somehow, spells disaster for the survival of the Jewish family. They believe this despite their own contention that only a "handful of women" are involved.

Women have often been among the foremost proponents of the traditionalist position, arguing that women need not seek "absolute" equality with men in synagogue ritual in order to make valuable contributions to Jewish life. Miriam Klein Shapiro is a doctoral candidate in Bible at the Seminary and works at the Teacher's Center of the Board of Jewish Education in White Plains, New York. In a recent article in *Sh'ma* she noted:

"If the movement should choose to ordain women, it will continue a trend which bothers me not only as a traditional Jew but also as a woman.... Men are telling us that to be truly equal a woman must do as the man does. This is the height of male chauvinism, and, unfortunately, too many women are buying it. I think that both the status of women and the quality of our religion can only suffer when there is no pride in women's roles. If anything, we need these more than ever today."

The new conservative mood has made its presence felt among members of the Seminary student body as well. One Rabbinical School student told this reporter that he was disturbed by the "hasty" manner in which changes had been instituted, especially in connection with women's issues, in recent years. Such innovations, he maintained, have so altered the face of the movement that, were he to apply to Rabbinical School today, he might not have selected the Seminary.

This student was one of 22 others who signed a petition opposing women's ordination "at the present time," which was sent to Chancellor Cohen last February 12th. The signatories to this letter felt that an earlier student poll, cited in the Commission report, was not sufficiently representative of student opinion on the issue. Israel Francus said he has observed this trend within the student body.

"Women's ordination is not inevitable and not the wave of the future," he said. The wave of the future, of a large proportion of the young rabbis, is toward tradition, which they feel is more authentic."

Yet, the "pro" forces within the student body have been the most vocal in making their position known. A number of Seminary students organized a Group for the Rabbinical Ordination of Women (GROW), which held its first meeting on February 29th. The group held a series of public forums over the following months that featured speakers on both sides of the debate in an attempt to educate the student body to the issues involved, and to organize them for political action.

It is not surprising that both supporters and opponents of women's ordination are preoccupied with young Jews and the impact which a decision in either direction will have upon their Jewish identification. For, in the view of all concerned, the future of the Conservative movement lies with its youth.

Opponents, such as the three signatories to the Commission's Minority Report, clearly feel that, "at a time when American Jewish youth seem to be turning more toward traditional values, and to an authentic halachic life style, this would seriously compromise the traditional image of the Conservative movement."

Others, such as Rabbi Stephen Lerner, insist that, "there are a lot of people ... on the fringes of the synagogue world for whom a rejection on this issue will disaffect them from the Conservative movement. It will confirm the rigidity of the movement in their minds." He was referring, in particular, to what he termed an "egalitarian traditional" group of young Conservative Jews.

"In the long run," he added, "we stand to gain a great deal from this decision, religiously, morally and practically in terms of numbers, though we may have some losses in the short run."

Undoubtedly, much of the controversy over this issue is aggravated by difficulties inherent in the organizational structure of Conservative Judaism, which functions as an umbrella group within which individuals at both ends of the religious spectrum can ideally feel comfortable. Thus, issues of this magnitude, which call for a major policy statement, have always threatened to split the movement.

Long-standing frictions among the various arms of the Conservative movement have been accentuated by the current debate over women's ordination. In particular, the problem of which group is to be recognized as the ultimate source of halachic authority has once again emerged in the tension between the RA Law Committee and the Seminary's Talmud Department faculty.

While the Law Committee has passed several rulings in recent years designed to increase the participation of women in all aspects of Jewish ritual, the senior members of the Talmud faculty have consistently opposed such decisions and are currently the most prominent opponents of women's ordination.

Within the RA itself, the simmering conflict between the organization's top leadership and its rank-and-file has once again erupted over the women's ordination question. To some extent, as has happened with other issues in the past, the women's ordination question has been "victimized," as one observer put it, by those involved in intra-RA struggles.

A number of RA members interpreted the adoption of the "no-action" resolution at the Los Angeles convention as a "vote of no confidence" in the generally liberal members of the RA "establishment" who, reportedly, ma every effort to pass one of the more positive worded propositions.

Among those is Rabbi I. Usher Kirshblu of the Jewish Center of Kew Gardens Hills Flushing, New York. Reacting to what regards as widespread dissatisfaction among R members with the manner in which the La Committee and top RA executives have ha dled the women's ordination issue and oth major questions, Kirshblum has established Committee for the Preservation of Traditi within the Rabbinical Assembly.

Kirshblum, who has challenged Wolfe K man and other RA leaders on several issues recent years, reported that his group, organiz in 1975, now numbers over 150 members. purpose is to lobby on behalf of t traditionalist point of view among those sitti on the Seminary Senate. The group has recent sent a letter, stating its members' beliefs, to JTS faculty members. While he stressed h group's commitment to traditional beliefs ar practices, Kirshblum added:

"What I abhor is the lack of democracy th has been existing in the Rabbinical Assemb and this, as much as anything else, our Co mittee is starting to fight and rebel again We will not be pushed around and be pawns the hands of a few who have been running t RA."

Kirshblum has predicted that there ma eventually be a split within the RA over t question of women's ordination. Comparin his group to that of the Reconstructionists, wh before the creation of their own movemen remained within the RA for some time after t group's founding, he speculated that traditio alists might continue to be RA members, b could establish their own Law and Placeme Committees. "I will not walk out on the RA he said, "but I shall continue my battle and rai my voice. What may happen will be that the will be a movement within the movement."

While Kirshblum and other opponents women's ordination within the RA ha received much public attention in rece months, a nation-wide RA survey, taken tw years ago by Rabbi Morton Waldman of t Queens RA Region, indicated that a cle majority of RA members supported wome ordination. Furthermore, according to Wol Kelman, a "Proclamation of Support" f women's ordination, which was circulated by group of RA members among the delegates the Los Angeles convention, and presented Dr. Cohen, demonstrated that "overwhelming" majority of those prese endorsed the Commission's recommendation

Kelman is convinced that an intra-RA spl as envisioned by Kirshblum, is highly unlikel He recalled that, in years past, other equal explosive debates involving observance of t second day of the three "pilgrimage festivals cooperation with the Reform movement Israel, annulment of marriages and countin women in the *minyan* produced alignments individuals for and against nearly identical those which have emerged in the debate ov women's ordination.

"Halachically speaking," he said, "countin women in a minyan is more serious (than wo en's ordination). Not one member of the R

ned. As a matter of fact, it is to me most nating that in the 29 years I've been here, at 200 Reform and Orthodox rabbis, and ably more, have joined the RA. I cannot : of five RA members who left to join the inical Council of America or the Central erence of American Rabbis," the Orthodox Reform rabbinical organizations, ctively.

While supporters of women's ordination are tive to the fact that some members of the ement would undoubtedly be uncomfor- with a Senate decision to ordain women, maintain that the legitimacy of tradition- opinion would be no more threatened than iously. Individual congregations, they e, could elect to have a female rabbi or not lo so, just as they have had options with rd to Law Committee decisions in the past. ncellor Cohen reassured members of the ement's right wing in his address before the Angeles convention:

"We reaffirm the legitimacy of a right and a in our own movement.... We are deter- ed to respect and to cherish those who find blished usage viable, and to indicate that blished usage and new usage, provided they both halachically grounded, are equally timate.... We are opening the doors to new ces of strength for us and for the whole se of Israel...."

recent weeks, the Seminary atmosphere grown increasingly tense as supporters and onents step up their lobbying efforts. While ed discussions are undoubtedly being car- on behind the scenes, the Seminary admin- tion appears to be making a concerted rt to keep these exchanges out of the public

Lilith was unable to obtain an interview with ncellor Cohen, despite several attempts to o, because, according to the Seminary Press ice, it is felt that a public airing of the debate is time would only aggravate the situation. Cohen warned in his April 27th letter, blic debate" on this controversial issue uld only be divisive." Similarly, some faculty nbers, all opponents of women's ordination, ined to be interviewed, because they felt it was best to keep things as "calm" as ible.

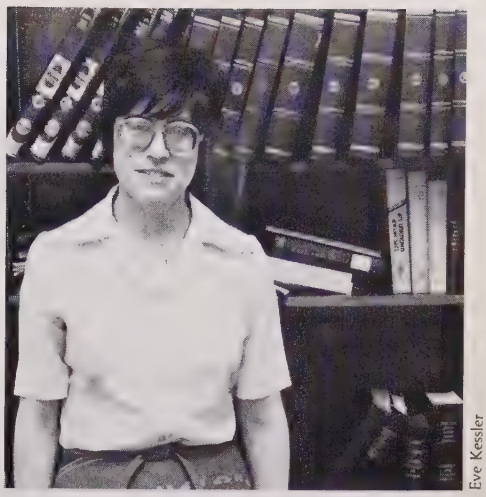
Although, at this point, no one is willing to dict the outcome, sources within the faculty e speculated as to the possible consequences vote in either direction. If the decision is in affirmative, applications from female candi- s would be processed as soon as possible, so o allow them to enter the Rabbinical School eptember, 1980.

While a significant number of faculty mem- would probably voice their protest against ffirmative Senate decision, the general sense ng proponents is that these professors are likely to either resign or leave the move- t. They point out that equally stormy ates in the past gave rise to threats of resig- on, none of which were carried out. As lfe Kelman observed:

"Nobody is going to leave.... I think that's

"For the past five years, Rabbinical School classes have been open to every student at the Seminary. There has yet to be a single faculty member in any department who refuses to admit women to his class...."
Judith Hauptman

"Development has been the guiding principle of Jewish history since ancient times.... We are opening the doors to new sources of strength for us and for the whole House of Israel...."
Gerson Cohen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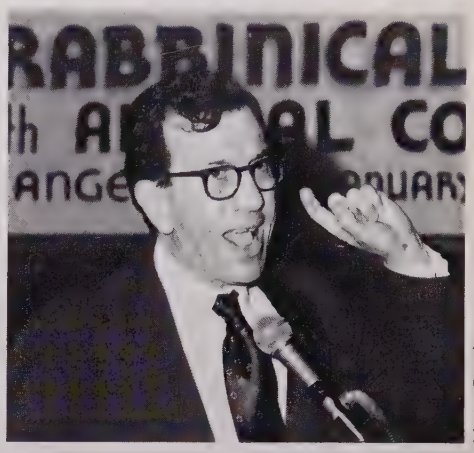

Maxine Picard

the genius of the Conservative movement—that we have learned to live together even with irreconcilable differences.... In all these years that I've been here, there have been many turbulent debates. But turbulence is the sign of a lively organization."

However, Francus said, "I think that the question [of opponents leaving] is irrelevant because I think that good sense will prevail, that this will not happen, that the Seminary at this time will not vote for the ordination of women."

Asked how she felt female rabbinical students would be received by instructors who are now opposed to women's ordination, Judith Hauptman replied, "For the past five years, Rabbinical School classes have been open to every student at the Seminary. There has yet to be a single faculty member in any department who refuses to admit women to his class. If this decision is made to ordain women rabbis, and if they [opponents within the faculty] remain here, as I believe they will do, there won't be any revenge. I don't think at that point they would turn around and say, 'I won't teach women.'"

If the Senate elects not to accept the Commission's recommendations, it is reasonable to assume that the RA would take independent action. For one thing, the RA could open its membership to female graduates of other rabbinical seminaries, a step provided for by the RA constitution, which was made sexless a few years ago. In addition, individual RA members may, in time, agree to privately ordain qualified women candidates, something which has already been accepted in principle by a number of rabbis.

In his address before the delegates to the Los Angeles convention, Gerson Cohen said, "It is my firm belief that we have the capacity to make this decision into the beginning of a new dedication and vitalization of the Conservative movement as a dynamic and self-confident force for Torah and Jewish values. It will require the seriousness, effort and dedication of each and every one of us."

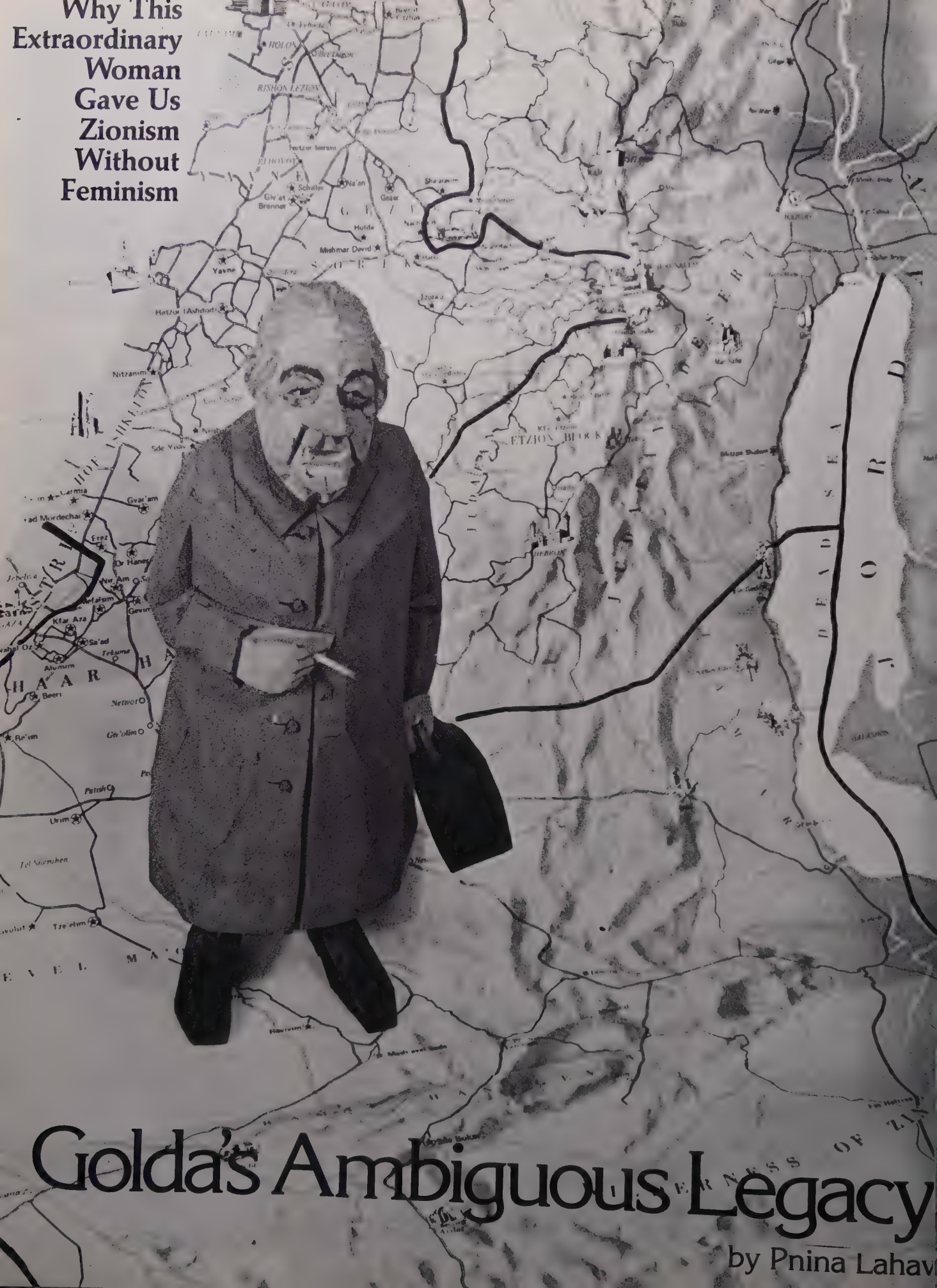
A great many committed Conservative Jews are observing the Seminary debate in the hope that the faculty members will take up that challenge. Sarah Lieberman, the Framingham, Massachusetts woman who addressed the New York hearings last November, is one of them.

As she spoke before the Commission, she was no doubt thinking of young Jewish girls in the school of which she is principal, or in the congregation of which her husband is the rabbi. Responding to her own question, she said:

"A woman (rabbi) can engage in scholarly pursuits, counsel couples and families, lead in study and prayer and visit hospitals and homes of bereavement. On a lighter note, she can certainly announce pages, lead in responsive readings, attend endless meetings and deliver invocations at shopping center dedications.

"But, above all, like her male counterpart, she can be a role model, exemplary in moral and religious conduct which, together with learning, is the basic requirement of clergy."

Why This Extraordinary Woman Gave Us Zionism Without Feminism



Golda's Ambiguous Legacy

by Pnina Lahav

t was customary in Israel to refer to Golda as "the best *man* in the Cabinet."

This popular remark conveys at one and the time the public admiration for this unique an's achievements *and* the patriarchal ext of the society in which she rose to the For, contrary to myth, Israel is hardly an tarian society. The 1978 report of the Com-ion to Appraise the Status of Women in l revealed that the participation of women in vels of public service is very low, and that it nes as the position becomes more powerful prestigious. This unequal situation prevails in ocial and economic spheres as well.

Golda, therefore, cannot be viewed as either symbol or the product of an egalitarian ty. How, then, should she be viewed by nists? Of what significance is her career from minist point of view? How did she make it to top? How did she come to be the only an accepted as a full-fledged member of the elite group of top decision-makers, the only ister With Portfolio, the only woman Prime ister?

Golda was first and foremost a political al. She was exposed to politics at an early and displayed an interest in public activities e yet a child. Wherever she went—the local r Zionist chapter, the kibbutz, the Labor y—she quickly joined the inner circle of y makers.

Was it the "iron will and bossiness" she rited from Bobbe Golde—the great-dmother for whom she was named and to m she bore a striking resemblance? her ordinary talent for organizing people and ying policy? her tendency outward—away n her parents' home where she did not get gh attention and understanding?

Golda did not have a happy childhood. Born iev, Czarist Russia, in 1898, she was the sixth even children in the Mabovitch family, but the second to survive (four children died in ncy).

her early childhood she experienced miser-poverty; overt and violent anti-Semitism; absence of a father, who had gone to erica, the *"goldene medina,"* to earn a living; and nse, sometimes hostile relationship between mother and her elder sister, Sheyna. Sheyna, years older than Golda, and, according to da "one of the great influences of my life," a political revolutionary. "Goldele," by the of five, alert and eager to understand, had dy been exposed to political meetings where alism and Zionism were heatedly debated.

When she was eight years old Golda immi-ed with her family to Milwaukee. At age 11, ittle girl by now known as Goldie formed an association, rented a hall and raised funds to enable her classmates to purchase school text-books.

Goldie wanted to learn, to go to high school and become a teacher. Her parents objected: "Men don't like smart girls." Yet she insisted on "the right to do as I wanted," and at age 14 ran away from home and enrolled in a high school in Denver. Two years later she returned home and soon distinguished herself—first as a local, then a national activist in the Labor Zionist movement.

At age 23, now married to Morris Meyerson, a gentle, apolitical man, she fulfilled her dream and made *aliyah*. Three years at Kibbutz Merhavia, four years in Jerusalem, and Golda, mother of two and separated from her husband, launched a formidable, meteoric career in Israeli politics.

The story is well known: in Mandatory Palestine she was a member of the core elite which led the *Yishuv* (Jewish community) to independence. She was a member of the Executive Committee of the Histadrut (General Federation of Labor), head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, and negotiator with the Mandatory Government. After Israel gained independence, she served first as ambassador to the Soviet Union, then six years as Minister of Labor, nine years as Minister of Foreign Affairs and, finally, five years as Prime Minister. Even a staunch opponent such as dovish leader Aryeh (Lyova) Eliav called her achievements outstanding and her contribution to Israel invaluable.

True, Golda rose to power at a time when every contribution counted, when competition was not as tight, and when the environment was much more sensitive to gender equality and more supportive of women. However, these factors should not blind us to Golda's unique qualities, her talents, energy, and, above all, her iron will and her total devotion to public activity. Golda was not one of those mothers who first raise their children and then enter politics. Neither did she settle for a compromising balance between the call of office and the demands of family life. She was as tenacious about her career as any ambitious, determined man, devoting endless time and energy to it, and sacrificing the joys of family life as much as any man would.

Golda opposed, even ridiculed the feminist movement, especially later in her life, when she was internationally known and looked to by millions of women as a role model and for moral support. She isolated the most unpopular and radical elements of the feminist movement and presented them as representatives of the feminist philosophy. In her 1973 interview with Oriana Fallaci, she said of feminists:

> *You mean those nuts who burn their bras and walk around all disheveled and hate men? They're crazy. Crazy. How can one accept crazy creatures who deem it a misfortune to get pregnant and a disaster to give birth to children?*

One is dumbfounded at the distortion. Indeed, it takes extraordinary political shrewdness to strip a philosophy so, and present marginal manifestations as its core.

Why did Golda oppose feminism so vehemently? Was she really, as she asserted in the Fallaci interview, never hindered by the fact that she was a woman? One is tempted to answer with Golda's favorite word—"nonsense." For who learned, at age 14, that married women were not allowed by state law to work as teachers?—Golda. Who could not enter Canada because married women could not take up their own citizenship then?—Golda. Who was barred from speaking in the synagogue because she was a woman? Whose candidacy was originally rejected by the kibbutz because an American girl neither "could . . . [nor] . . . would do the extremely tough physical work . . ." and because the kibbutz's 30 bachelors wanted single, not married women? Who lost the municipal election in Tel Aviv, as late as 1955, only for the reason that she was a woman?—Golda, and again Golda.

Throughout her career, she told Fallaci, "men were good to me." Implied in this is the obvious: men were not as "good" to other women. They singled her out of the multitude of women. What she got she was given as a matter of privilege, not of right. Furthermore, not only did she have to join their world and play their game—she could not have made it had she not accepted unconditionally the rules of the game of the male world—but she also recognized, as she admitted to Fallaci, that "to be successful, a woman has to be much better at her job than a man."

Golda's sufferings because she was a woman were acute. It was Golda who had to sever relations with her parents at age 14 because she could not accept the traditional sex roles they expected of her. It was Golda who separated from her husband after four miserable years as a full-time mother and wife because "I yearned for purposeful, interesting life." As she explained to Fallaci:

> *Domestic felicity wasn't enough for me: I needed to do what I was doing! To give it up would have seemed to me . . . [a] dishonesty toward myself.*

How, then could she not realize that what was claimed for herself should also be claimed for other women?

The conventional explanation is simply that her consciousness was not raised. Had she been aware of the feminist analysis, she surely would have become a feminist. Alas, she did have ample opportunity. As a teenager in Denver, she was present at endless political discussions about women's role in society. The suffragists' campaign for equality did not escape her attention. In the kibbutz, her female comrades presented to her the feminist conception of equality. She was aware, yet she single-mindedly, determinedly brushed it aside. Zionism and only Zionism was her cause.

This single-mindedness explains in part her blindness to feminism. Her traumatic encounter with anti-Semitism in Czarist Russia may have led her to recognize Zionism as the overwhelming cause to which her total energy should be devoted. We also know that she thought that sex inequality would be ended once Zionism materialized. For she considered socialism to be part of Zionism, and under socialism, she thought, equality would be obtained. It is well

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a Lahav is a lecturer in constitutional law at the ew University, Jerusalem. She is presently spending abbatical at Harvard, where she is writing a book on om of expression in Israel. She dedicates this article to other-in-law, Mrs. Naomi Lahav, a pioneer and kib-member in the 1930's, who "represents those reds of women who upheld the cause of women's and laid the foundations for sex-equality in Israel."

ood statuette of Golda (partial map of Israel in the background) s her ubiquitous cigarette (tough politician) and handbag ed grandma). Was it because her public saw these two roles as dictory that Golda was such a popular subject for caricature, on a folkloric aspect?

known that she recognized the hardships placed upon women by the nuclear family, and that she considered the kibbutz, with its communal services and communal child care, the only adequate answer to the Woman Question.

But there are other explanations, much more speculative, which should nevertheless be aired. The first has to do with her personal background. She grew up in a home where she was surrounded by two energetic, strong-willed and outspoken women—her mother and Sheyna. She barely knew her father until she was eight, and he was a gentle, unassertive man. Sheyna had a decisive influence upon her. She tells us that she left Sheyna's house in Denver, where she had found shelter from home, because her sister was too "bossy."

Maybe the indifference to feminism stems from her resentment of these strong women who so influenced her: a rebellion against the decisive personalities in her life and an attempt to show that she could do better. Indeed, she was known for her dislike of other active women—beginning in the kibbutz, where the only comrades she did not like were the women, and ending with her ferocious, relentless fight at the peak of her career against civil rights activist Shulamit Aloni, whom she drove out of the Labor Party.

Golda needed to be unique, singled out. Being one of the precious few women in politics gave her that gratification. The pursuit of feminism would have brought in many more women and made her ordinary. Note, in this connection, what she told Fallaci she would like her children to say about her: "Yes, our mother did neglect us too much . . . but . . . being what she was, she *gave us so much more than an ordinary mother.*" Do we hear some disdain for ordinary women, those who adhere to traditional stereotypes?

Another possible explanation which may throw light on the evolution of her attitude to feminism from indifference to opposition relates to her experiences and feelings as a mother. Golda had acute guilt feelings toward her children which became increasingly pronounced as she grew old. When they were young and needed her attention most, especially since their father was not at home, she was either preoccupied with her work or away. Golda was deeply disturbed by the deprivation she felt she had inflicted upon them, although she also felt that she could not have done otherwise. One way in which she tried to redeem herself was by carefully cultivating the image of a devoted grandmother. Her emphasis on the "natural" traditional sex role went well with her rejection of feminism. One wonders if these guilt feelings did not lead her subconsciously to use her powerful position to prevent other women from repeating her "mistakes."

During the first six years of the State, Golda was in a key position to mold the status of women. As Minister of Labor, she aggressively pushed for and passed an impressive complex of labor legislation which consolidated the rights of workers, men and women. Indeed, this was one of Golda's shining achievements. The legislation she passed for the protection of working women was much more progressive than any available in the West at that time. The prohibition against firing a woman because she was pregnant, the mandatory, paid maternity leave, and others enhanced the status of women.

But some of these provisions, considered from the feminist point of view, were also subversive of gender equality. The mandatory, *non-optional,* maternity leave; the prohibition on night work for women; the earlier retirement age for women—all designed to protect "women as women"—encouraged and institutionalized the concept of double roles for women.

This scheme made women perform their traditional sex roles at home and, at the same time, try to develop a career outside the home. What actually happened was that the incompatibility between these two sets of roles meant that women would develop a moderate, unpretentious career which would not jeopar-

Israel grew up to believe that this was the o legitimate way for them.

Turned off by Golda's performance mother and wife, Israeli women also came equate political activity with paying a dear p in terms of family life. Didn't Golda her "prove" that maintaining double roles succ fully was impossible?

Israeli feminists thus remain deeply amb lent about the saga and the legacy of Go Meir—proud of her achievements, puzzled her rejection of feminism. Puzzled because far as her own life was concerned, what Go wanted was the opportunity to be a person to break out of traditional stereotypes and roles. And this is precisely what the noble, found philosophy of feminism advocates.

In this, Golda's favorite photo of herself, she speaks at a tree-planting ceremony on Mt. Gil in the year before Israel became a state. The security of Israel was Golda's central pass

Cynthia Ozick's

Notes Toward Finding the Right Question

Fifteen Brief Meditations, As Follows:

1. *Is the Right Question "Theological"?* ***2.*** *Why Isn't the Right Question Theological?* ***3.*** *The Approach of "Simple Justice," and How It Is Thwarted.* ***4.*** *On Not Being A Jew in the Synagogue.* ***5.*** *On Not Being a Juridical Adult.* ***6.*** *Women, Debtors, and Thieves.* ***7.*** *A Man, Too, Is Sometimes Exempted.* ***8.*** *On the Denigration of the Synagogue.* ***9.*** *On the Diminution of Prestige.* ***10.*** *Women's Devotional Literature: On the Discovery of Hacks and Forgers Among Those Who Mock Women.* ***11.*** *On the Depth of the Loss and the Absence of Grief.* ***12.*** *On Jewish Repair and Renewal.* ***13.*** *Footnote: An Objection to the Foregoing, from the View of the "Pious".* ***14.*** *Seven Conclusions for the Attention of the Traditional Rabbinate.* ***15.*** *But Suppose the Question* Is *Sacral? The Missing Commandment: The Two Walls of Scandal.*

1: Is the Right Question "Theological"?

The philosopher Suzanne K. Langer somewhere observes that every answer is concealed in the question that elicits it, and that what we must strive to do, then, is not look for the right answer, but attempt rather to discover the right question. The danger in the present discussion—the relation of women to the Jewish Way—is that the wrong question will be asked, inexorably leading to answers that are as good as lies.

How can one learn whether one has asked the "right" or the "wrong" question? From a consideration of the answer. By way of illustration: we have lately heard a complaint that Jewish mainstream tradition, being devoid of female anthropomorphic imagery, not to mention female deity-figures, is an obstacle to the self-esteem of women. Jewish women, we are told, lack idealized larger-than-life "models." The "female nurturing principle" is absent from Jewish cosmic notions.

Formulated as a question, the complaint emerges as follows: how shall we infiltrate into Jewish thought an adumbration of divinity which is *also female*?

One of the most frequent answers is to tinker with the language of liturgy. For instance, for the phrasing of "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe," we are advised to substitute the term "Queen of the Universe."

The answer stuns with its crudity. It is preposterous. What? Millennia after the cleansing purity of Abraham's vision of the One Creator, a return to Astarte, Hera, Juno, Venus, and all their proliferating sisterhood? Sex goddesses, fertility goddesses, mother goddesses? The sacrifices brought to these were often enough human. This is the new vision intended to "restore dignity" to Jewish women? A resurrection of every ancient idolatry the Jewish Idea came into the world to drive out, so as to begin again with a purifying clarity?

The answer slanders and sullies monotheism. The answer has tested the question; the question fails. Without an uncompromising monotheism, there can be no Jewish Way; it becomes, then, somebody else's way; but not the Jewish one. Not for nothing does a Jew fervently recite, morning and evening, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One," in order to reaffirm daily the monotheistic principle.

A second answer, less coarse, seemingly more "philosophical," is offered to the same question. This second answer proceeds as follows:

"If the phrase 'Queen of the Universe' is too scary, too suggestive of Caananite *baalim* (gods) or Greek statuary or Christian madonnas, then why not draw on the Female Principle latent in certain historical byways of the Jewish experience itself? How about the Shekhina, the female shadow or emanation of the Godhead, whom we encounter in Kabbala? No one can accuse *her* of incurring idolatry; like God, she is without form; we know of her only that she is She. The Shekhina admits, among ideas of formlessness, the idea of the female."

Subtle. But again an assault on monotheism.

"Wait! Before you jump to conclusions about my position," says this second answer, "let me go forward a bit. You are about to tell me that the God of the Jews has no incarnation, no human form, no human attributes, in addition to no shade whatever of duality or plurality. Why, then, all the human imagery we already encounter in liturgy?"

Because of the limitations of the human mind," replies the answer's interlocutor. "Who can conceive of 'grasp' without 'hand'?"

"But the Lord's outstretched hand, symbolic though it is, is always a symbolic *male* hand. If, in your toleration of the limitations of the human mind and the poverty of our human language, you already tolerate a *male* anthropomorphic image, why won't you tolerate a *female* anthropomorphic image?"

The interlocutor is silent.

"Or to say it otherwise," continues the answer, "if you are unyielding in the purity of your uncompromising monotheism, why do you tolerate a *male* monotheism?"

The answer has turned into a question, and the question, it seems, is improving. It is improving because it has left behind goddesses and female Emanations and is approaching the problems of language, not in the tinkering sense, but elementally. What helpless babies our tongues are! It is as foolish to refer to the Creator-of-the-Universe as He as it is to refer to the Creator-of-the-Universe as She. (Nor is the compassionate Voice of the Lord of History a neuter.)

The question, even in the improved version of its answer, can take us only to quibbles about the incompetence of pronouns. It remains the wrong question. It leads nowhere. It has no fruit. It is dust.

2: Why Isn't the Right Question "Theological"?

Why, really, is any question about the nature of divinity not the right kind of Jewish question?

For two reasons: first, "the nature of divinity" is a theological question, and Jews traditionally have no theology. Concerning the nature of God, we are enjoine to be agnostic, and not to speculate. "Yo will see My back, but My face you will nc see." And when Moses asks God about t nature of divinity, the reply is only: "I am that I am." In Deuteronomy we encounte a God who asserts that the mysteries of t universe belong to God, and that it is our human business only to be decent to one another, steering clear of what we have n the capacity to fathom.

Secondly, when the question concerning the nature of divinity is pointed towar issues of female consciousness, then it be comes simply irrelevant. Here, with regarc to women, it is overwhelmingly the wrong question. *The status of women is, in any Jewish context, by no means a "theological" question. It is a sociological fact; and that is a much lighter load to carry.*

To see what the difference is, conside one aspect of the problem for women as perceived by Christianity and Judaism. Consider Eve.

In both the Jewish and Christian views Eve, the First Woman, is an inferior moral creature; she cannot keep a promise to God, and she inveigles the First Man, also an inferior moral creature, into a similar b trayal. Both are punished—as equals—by expulsion from Paradise, and by the impo tion of two kinds of labor.

Now that may be a nasty portrait of th First Woman, but—in the Jewish view—that is pretty much that. The human race continues, under realistic—*i.e.,* nonparadisic—conditions. You can take Eve out of Scripture and the nature of divinity continues as before: I-am-that-I-am.

Not so in the Christian scheme. There Eve's "sin" leads to Adam's "fall." The F of Man is not a Jewish notion; it is purely Christian. And without that Fall, there would be no need for Redemption; and without a need for Redemption, there would be no Crucified Christ and no Vica ous Atonement. In short, for Christianity, you take Eve out of Scripture, Christianity itself vanishes.

Eve, the bad woman, is theologically crucial to the survival and continuation of Christianity.

Eve, the bad woman, is irrelevant to t survival and continuation of Judaism.

The Approach of "Simple stice," and How It Is Thwarted

feminist Letty Cottin Pogrebin: "A life Torah is embodied in Hillel's injunction, not do unto others what you would have them do unto you.' Men would like done unto them what is done unto men in the name of *halachah.* For me, t is that."

Within the scheme of *halachah,* vever, that is not that, although *achah* is above all a system of juris- dence founded on the ideal of the ctical attainment of real, not seeming, tice. Developed over centuries by ools of rabbis through precedent after cedent, *halachah* evolved through appli- ion of general principles to urgent prac- l cases. *Halachah* is deemed to be ible, adaptive, attentive to need and uality—the opposite of the dry bones of caring law. And why this should be is ar—*halachah* is founded on and in- porates Scriptural aspirations toward de- cy of daily conduct and the holiness of ordinary. A deep halachic premise is t the individual's well-being is enhanced, ough reasoning compassion, by the mmunal good.

Juridical systems also pay attention to sses. Under *halachah,* women *qua* men are seen as a subdivision of manity, not as the main class itself. Now ubdivision is, by definition, not the damental rule, but rather a somewhat viating instance of the fundamental rule: tep apart from the norm. Under *achah,* the male is the norm, and the nale is a class apart. For instance, there Tractate entitled *Nashim,* "Women"; there is no corresponding Tractate ed "Men"—because clearly all that does apply to women falls to men. Men are rule, and women are the exceptions to rule.

Nevertheless, the explicators of *achah* (one hesitates to use the term logists) claim that the Biblical "Male d female created He them" means, quite ply, equality of the sexes in the eye of Creator; and so far, so good. It is only en we come to examine "equality" achically that we discover that it is ant to signify not equal, but mplementary. Male and female are wed as halves of a whole, goes the ument, and each half has its own arate rights and responsibilities: there distinct roles for men and women, ich overlap very little.

When "complementary" is taken to be relation between the norm and its viation (or call it the rule and its excep- n), then the role of the norm will be derstood to be superior to the role of the eption.

When "equal" is defined as "distinct," n simple justice is thwarted.

4: On Not Being a Jew in the Synagogue

Item: In the world at large I call myself, and am called, a Jew. But when, on the Sabbath, I sit among women in my traditional shul and the rabbi speaks the word "Jew," I can be sure that he is not referring to me. For him, "Jew" means "male Jew."

When the rabbi speaks of women, he uses the expression (a translation from a tender Yiddish phrase) "Jewish daughter." He means it tenderly.

"Jew" speaks for itself. "Jewish daughter" does not. A "Jewish daughter" is someone whose identity is linked to, and defined by, another's role. "Jew" defines a person seen in the light of a culture. "Daughter" defines a relationship that is above all biological. "Jew" signifies adult responsibility. "Daughter" evokes immaturity and a dependent and subordinate connection.

When my rabbi says, "A Jew is called to the Torah," he never means me or any other living Jewish woman.

My own synagogue is the only place in the world where I, a middle-aged adult, am defined exclusively by my being the female child of my parents.

My own synagogue is the only place in the world where I am not named Jew.

5: On Not Being a Juridical Adult

Though we read in Scripture that Deborah was a judge in Israel, under post-Biblical halachic rules a woman may not be a witness. In this debarment she is in a category with children and imbeciles.

In the halachic view, a woman is not a juridical adult.

She is exempted from liturgical and other responsibilities that are connected with observing a particular practice at a specific time. This, it is explained, is a compassionate and sensible ruling. What? Shall she be obliged to abandon the baby at her breast to run to join a prayer quorum at a fixed hour?

The so-called compassionate and sensible ruling perceives a woman exclusively as a biological figure. Time-fixed communal responsibility is left exclusively to males—as if milk were the whole definition of parenthood; or as if, in fact, milk were the whole definition of a woman; or as if in each marriage there is to be only one reliably committed parent, the one with the milk; or as if a mother, always and without exception, is in charge of sucklings only.

If the context should change from functional to intrinsic, from the identity of relationship to the identity of essence, from the ideal of extenuation to the ideal of inclusiveness—ah, then compassionate exemption is transmogrified to demeaning exclusion.

To exempt is to exclude.
To exclude is to debar.
To debar is to demote.
To demote is to demean.

Young girls, older women, and unmarried women do not have babies at their breasts. Where is the extenuating ideal for them? They are "exempted"—i.e., excluded, debarred—from public worship all the same.

The halachic rationale for universal female exemption, however, is not based on compassion for harried mothers, nor is it, as some erroneously believe, related to any menstrual taboo. It rests on a single phrase—*kavod ha-tsibur*—which can be rendered in English as "the honor [or self-respect] of the community." One infers that a woman's participation would degrade the community (of men).

I am not shocked by the use of this rationale. (I *am* perhaps shocked at a halachic scholar of my acquaintance who refers to the phrase "the honor of the community" as a "concept that seems to defy comprehension.") Indeed, I welcome this phrase as wonderfully illuminating: it supports and lends total clarity to the idea that, *for Judaism, the status of women is a social, not a sacred, question.*

Social status is not sacral; it cannot be interpreted as divinely fixed; it can be repented of, and repaired.

6: Women, Debtors, and Thieves

The Biblical practice of debtors' servitude—applied also to thieves—was unusually large-minded in that, when the debtor's or the thief's term of work had expired, he was obligated to return to his former status as an ordinary citizen. A debtor or a thief who refused independence after the expiration of his servant's term had a hole bored in his ear—a mark of contempt for one who declined to take on the responsibilities of a higher status.

Under *halachah,* as presently viewed, there is no way for a woman to achieve a change in status. Her present status (according to my halachic scholar-acquaintance) "appears to defy emendation or modification within the halachic context."

What the Jewish juridical genius could once do for a thief, it cannot now do for a woman?

7: A Man, Too, Is Sometimes Exempted

There is at least one other category of person—besides a woman—who is exempted, under *halachah,* from the minyan, the quorum of ten required for a public worship service. This is a man in a state of new bereavement. He is regarded as being unable to perform in a condition of deep grief.

Only a visit from the Angel of Death can reduce a man to the quotidian, unextreme, situation of an exempted woman. How shall one parse this odd equation? To enjoy the public status of an ordinary woman, claim a death in your family. Or, when a *minyan* is forming, if you would learn what it is to be a woman, go into mourning. Or, to push it still farther: a woman is like a man who has suffered an irreversible loss. Ah, Freud!

8: On the Denigration of the Synagogue

The desire of women to participate in public worship in traditional congregations—to be "counted," literally, as a member of the quorum of ten—is often met with a lecture explicating American Jewish sociology. It is only under the influence of the ministries of our Christian neighbors, we are told, that the synagogue has become central—whereas it is, in fact, not at all central, and never was: the true matrix of Jewish life is in the family and in the home.

In all the history of the synagogue—one of the oldest institutions in the world—there never was a time when the synagogue was, if not slighted, then as aggressively diminished as it is now. And why is it only *now* that "The synagogue is secondary!" becomes a battlecry of the traditional rabbinate? The emphasis on family and home has not diminished; why, then, should the significance of synagogue worship quite suddenly be reduced?

Answer: *The synagogue becomes a focus of disparagement only at that moment when women begin to make equal claims on it.*

9: On the Diminution of Prestige

Item: In liberal synagogues, where women may carry the scrolls of Torah for the festival of Simchat Torah, fewer and fewer men come forward to receive this honor.

Item: In liberal congregational structures, where women may become congregational presidents, fewer and fewer men come forward to vie for this honor.

The "honor of the community" may mean, no more and no less, jealousy over prestige: prestige is always reduced when a lower caste is given access to it.

10: Women's Devotional Literatur On the Discovery of Hacks and Forgers Among Those Who Mock Women

Glückel of Hameln, the remarkable seventeenth-century Yiddish-language memoiri thought of herself mainly as a businesswoman and as a mother recording her lif for her children. But anyone who encount ters her miraculous book knows better. In wonderful introduction to a new Schocke edition of *The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln,* Professor Robert S. Rosen remarks, "Glückel, although she would n have known what to make of this, was a artist."

She would not have known what to make of this. How could she know she w an artist? How could she know that what she was expressing was a lust for storytelling, a gift for the moral lyric? In anoth body, in another society, she might have turned out to be Wordsworth. In another body and in another society she did, in fact, turn out to be Heinrich Heine, who was one of her descendants.

Thinking about Glückel of Hameln qui naturally leads to thinking about Rebecca Tiktiner and Toibe Pan. They were both poets, and they both lived in Prague. Beyond this we know nothing, since, unl Glückel, they left no memoirs. Their nam are associated with the composition of *techinot,* lyrical devotional poems.

The famously brilliant Beruriah, celebrated not only as the wife of Rabbi Meir but also in her own right, was know to speak satirically of those rabbinic passages which make light of the intellect of women. To punish her for her impudence a rabbinic storyteller, bent on mischief toward intellectual women, reinvented Beruriah as a seductress. She comes dow to us, then, twice notorious: first as a kin of bluestocking, again as a licentious woman. There is no doubt that we are meant to see a connection between the two.

No one dares malign the creators of th *techinot.* Of course, they are usually termed poetesses rather than poets, but that is something else—their characters a never called into question. The authors of the *techinot* are models of piety. But because the *techinot* are traditionally projected as being the work of women poets, it is the *techinot* themselves that a maligned for their literary quality. We shal never be able objectively to determine whether Rebecca Tiktiner and Toibe Pan Prague were good or bad poets; simply because they are known to have compose *techinot,* they are by definition bad poets.

Consider the subject-matter of the Seder *Techinot,* published at Basel in 160 There are prayers for taking away the priestly portion of the *challah* dough, for baking Sabbath cake, for putting on Sabbath clothing; there are prayers for

nersion in the *mikvah,* for pregnancy,
for the moments just prior to child-
n; there is even a prayer for wise philan-
opy for the use of a well-off woman.
re is a prayer for lighting the Sabbath
dles, and another for the approach of
new moon.

All these devotionals reflect exactly the
gious situation of women, then and
v. Half of them are biological; the other
concern themselves with the limited
gious space offered to women.

But it was not only the artistry of the
hinot that was ridiculed; it was also the
tations of their subject-matter. And yet
subject-matter was ordained by the
trictions inherent in the religious oppor-
ities of women. It is as if you put a poet
a steel cage in the middle of a desert and
him with pen and paper. If he is by
ure a religious poet, he will find ways to
ise the Creator in writing devotional
cs about the only matter available to
n: steel bars, a tract of sand, the roof
d floor of his cage, and his own body.
d then, having done all this to your reli-
us poet, you mock at him for the
ucity of his images and observations.
ther than mock, one should marvel: the
piration to praise the Creator becomes
re and more artful with less and less op-
rtunity. "To see the world in a grain of
nd," Blake wrote, and that is the mode
the *techinot* written by women.
stricted to their own bodies, they saw
divine impulse in the only cage alloted
them.

That cage was summarized in the word
חלה , an acronym which evokes the
olical Hannah, but refers to three
cepts especially applicable to the
gious life of women: *challah, niddah,*
dlakah: giving the priestly share of
ugh, observing the period of menstrua-
n, and lighting the Sabbah candles.

While the authors of the *piyyutim*—a
st rollcall of poets—explored a variegated
dscape of themes, and reached toward
th cosmos and eros for their imagery, the
thors of the *techinot* had only these
ee coarse bars to their cage: *challah,*
ddah, hadlakah. As a consequence, they
re universally scolded, ridiculed, and
ndemned for their coarseness and their
ucity and the sentimentality of their
ion.

But what about that other branch of
omen's literature," also written in Yid-
n, the *Tsena Urena* (containing the
tion of the week and folk tales)? We
y call it a "branch," so ambitious, rich,
l abundant it is, although the *Tsena*
na is the work of a single teeming,
nkling, original, joyfully pious mind,
nbining Scriptural stories both in transla-
tion and paraphrase, legend, myth, tale, homily, and a vivid storyteller's style. It is true that the *Tsena Urena* is not taken seriously either, but, unlike the *techinot*, it is not reviled or snickered over. It is an amalgam of enormous erudition and an energetic poetic imagination: what could have motivated any ordinary scholar to undertake such a work? Jacob ben Isaac Ashkenazi, though he was in possession of all the attributes of an "ordinary" scholar of the 17th century, had nevertheless a secret motivation for the composition of the *Tsena Urena*. We will come to it in a moment. His public motivation, however, was noble enough: it was to raise up and enlighten the minds of women; to make Torah accessible in the vernacular. The author of the *Tsena Urena* appeared to take a different view from the Rambam: Maimonides frequently uses the phrase "women and the ignorant," denies women the right to be appointed to communal office, and recommends wife-beating. It is clear from the tone of the text that the author of the *Tsena Urena* did not hold such vulgar views of his readership: in fact, we may guess that he was both in love with his readership, and at the same time gave little thought to its sex, only to the *tabula rasa* of its mind. Why did Jacob ben Isaac Ashkenazi turn to a readership of women? The answer is deliciously intoxicating: where else should he, could he, turn for the expression of the mandate of the storyteller's imagination?

The secret of the *Tsena Urena* is that it was written out of the desire to play with Story. We may think of it as the first Yiddish novel; the first *Jewish* novel, in fact, in an age when to invent such a thing was impossible. What the *Tsena Urena* did was, in a manner of speaking, to smuggle Dickens into the community of women; women, Jacob Ashkenazi's sole readers, were artistically enriched as the other half of the community was not.

But if the *Tsena Urena* was regarded with a certain tolerance because it was taken to be—though without value—good enough for women, it was still perceived as a debased literature. Not so debased, however, as the *techinot*: the *Tsena Urena* was after all, written by a man for the edification of women; its very premise (though not its secret imaginative essence) was patronization; its ostensible raison d'etre was looking down one's nose at a lesser mental breed in order to refine and elevate it, and as such the *Tsena Urena* earned a modicum of grudging respect.

The *techinot*, on the other hand, were tendered no respect at all, because they were purported to be written by women for women; they were themselves womanly products, the debased works of minds of limited capability and seriousness.

The *Tsena Urena* was not written for the sake of women; it was written for the sake of its own form and possibility, for the freedom it granted the writer. But if the *Tsena Urena* contains a delightful irony—that, pretending to cater to women, it was in actuality the only outlet in its time for an imaginative artist—so too do the *techinot* reflect an irony, though a mordant and cruel one.

I quote verbatim this remarkable passage from the *Jewish Encyclopedia:*

> *The names of the authors* [*of the* techinot] *are nearly all fictitious and high-sounding, and have been affixed in order to make the* techinot *salable. It is known that some of the* techinot *were written by indigent students of the Rabbinical Seminary of Vilna or Jitomir (among others, Naphtali Makil le'Ethon), and by Selekowitz, for nominal sums, and that the publishers stipulated that the writers should fashion the composition in tearful and heart-rending phrases to suit the taste of women readers. This forced cultivation of devotional feeling rendered the* techinot *exaggerated and over-colored, and this did not escape the criticism and ridicule of the men against the women who were such devotees of the* techinot.

Extraordinary. What we learn from this wipes out altogether the metaphor of the religious poet caged in a desert, with only his bars and his body and the desert sand to inspire his devotions. It is not that women were limited in the kind of poetry they sought to write; it is that they only rarely wrote at all. What we are examining when we look to the *techinot* to discover a history of unsung women poets is, instead, a long history of forgery and corruption; a history of a manipulated reader's market; a history of opportunistic publishing. While in English and French literature women had to adopt the names of men—"George Eliot" and "George Sand"—in order to be accepted as salable, in order *not* to be reviled as lacking in literary worth, here we discover a condition wherein men adopt the names of respectable though perhaps mythical women—for instance, "Devorah, wife of Naphtali, formerly Nasi of Palestine"—in order to be accepted as salable, and *on purpose* to be reviled as lacking in literary worth. In short, the very women's literature which was regarded as debased because it was written by women turns out to have been written instead by hungry male hacks in the employ of cynical commercial forgers. And the ridiculed intellectual work of women turns out instead to be the purposefully purple prose of contemptuous rabbinical opinion given over to commercial exploitation.

Rebecca Tiktiner and Toibe Pan, poets of Prague, suffer under a double burden: first, we do not know whether they were real poets or merely names invented for a pittance; and second, even if they really lived, even if they composed the most glorious devotional lyrics of their age, their poetry would be found to be inferior.

When women are condemned for the intellectual and artistic standards that are imposed on them, how are we to judge the moral nature of the hacks and forgers who condemn them?

11: On the Depth of the Loss and the Absence of Grief

Theorists of American Jewish sociology claim that the current women's agitation within the synagogue and in all parts of Jewish life is a response to the stimulus of the general women's movement. The traditional rabbinate tends to define feminist views as forms of selfishness, narcissism, and self-indulgence, all leading to what is always called "the breakdown of family life." It would be hard to deny the presence of selfishness, narcissism, and self-indulgence in a society much given over to these (and they are not confined to the women's movement); it would be hard also to deny the effect of the women's movement in stimulating more women to examine their lives as Jews.

But the sources of Jewish women's claims are more profound than simple external impingement. It is true that some of these claims appear to coincide with popular influence, and undoubtedly some are directly derivative. Indeed, one wants to join with those rabbis who take unhappy note of rampant faddism and superficiality —because the protests and claims of Jewish women are too serious to be classed with any intellectual fashion, or even with any compelling current movement.

That these protests and claims are occurring in this generation and not in any earlier generation is *not* due to the parallel advent of a movement. The timing is significant: now and not forty years ago: but it is not the upsurge of secular feminism that has caused the upsurge of Jewish feminism.

The timing is significant because the present generation stands in a shockingly new relation to Jewish history. It is we who have come after the cataclysm. We, and all the generations to follow, are, and will continue to be into eternity, witness-generations to Jewish loss. What was lost in the European cataclysm was not only the Jewish past—the whole life of a civilization —but also a major share of the Jewish future. We will never be in possession of the novels Anne Frank did not live to write. It was not only the intellect of a people in its prime that was excised, but the treasure of a people in its potential.

We are the generation which knows more than any generation before us what mass loss means. It means, for one thing, the loss of a culture, and the deprivation of transmission of that culture. It means lost scholars of Torah—a lost Rashi; a lost Rambam; a lost Baal Shem Tov; a lost Vilna Gaon. The loss of thousands upon thousands of achieved thinkers and physicians, nourishing scientists and artists. The loss of those who would have grown into healers, discoverers, poets.

Now the moment we introduce the idea of mass cultural loss through excision, then the "timeliness" of the feminist movement, and even its very juxtaposition with Jewish aspiration, becomes frivolous.

But first let us agree on certain premises —obligatory premises, without which it is debasing to proceed. Let us agree, first, that the European cataclysm has no analogies, and that it is improper to draw any analogy from it. And then let us agree that the European cataclysm is not a metaphor for anything; it is not "like" anything else. And, further, let us agree that the European cataclysm is not to be "used," least of all for debating points. It is not to be used, but it is imperative that it should, as far that is possible, be understood. It is also imperative that we derive particular lesso from it. The lessons are multitudinous a variegated, and we cannot yet clearly imagine even a fraction of them.

Yet we must dare to imagine.

Having said all that—that the Europe cataclysm is no analogy, no metaphor, n rhetorical instrument—let us then begin think about Jewish mentality in the wak the cataclysm. We are not as we were. not unnatural that mass loss should gen ate not only lessons but legacies. An ea quake of immorality and mercilessness, atrocity on such a scale, cannot happen and then pass us by unaltered. The land scapes of our minds have shapes, hollov illuminations, mounds and shadows different from before. For us who live in the aftermath of the cataclysm, the total fact of the Nazi "selection" appears to affect, to continue to affect, all the regio of our ideas—even if some of those idea at first glance look to be completely unr lated issues.

Indeed, it may be that for Jews like u who come immediately after the Nazi period, there *are* no "unrelated issues." And surely there is a connection betwee say, the whole pattern of impediments a distinctions which stop up Jewish passio in women, and the Jewish passions of Hannah Senesh and Anne Frank and the poet Gertrud Kolmar and all those young women (whose names are not so access as these) who fought in the Warsaw Ghetto. In the ragged battlements of the Warsaw Ghetto there was no *ezrat nash* no women's gallery.

The connection I am about to make not one we reflect on every day; yet it h infiltrated us, it is a legacy and a lesson, and its mournful language is as follows: *having lost so much and so many.*

To think in terms of *having lost so much and so many* is not to "use" the Holocaust, but to receive a share in its famously inescapable message: that afte the Holocaust every Jew will be more a Jew than ever before—and not just sup ficially and generally, but in every path, taken or untaken, deliberate or haphaza looked-for or come upon.

The consciousness that we are the fi generation to stand after the time of ma loss is knowledge that spills inexorably— how could it not?—into every cell of the structure of our lives. What part of us is free of it, or can be free of it? Which regions of discourse or idea or system c

e properly declare to be free of it? Who ould risk supposing that the so-called vomen's issue" can be free of it?

Put beside this view, how trivializing it to speak of the "influence" of the omen's movement—as if Jewish steadstness could be so easily buffeted by ecular winds of power and pressure and ew opinion and new perception. The truth that it would be a blinding mistake to ink that the issue of Jewish women's ccess to every branch and parcel of Jewh expression is mainly a question of discrimination" (which, if that were all, *ould* justify it as a feminist issue). No. he point is not that Jewish women want quality as women with men, but *as Jews ith Jews.* The point is the necessity—*aving lost so much and so many*—to hare Jewish history to the hilt.

This lamentation—*having lost so much nd so many*—produces not an analogy or metaphor, but a lesson, as follows:

Consider the primacy and priority of cholarship; scholarship as a major Jewish alue; scholarship as a shortcut-word signiing immersion in Torah, thought, poetry, thics, history—the complete life of a eople's most energetic moral, intellectual, piritual, lyrical soarings and diggings.

Or look for a moment to Adin Steinltz's definition of that aspect of Torah alled Talmud:

From the strictly historical point of view, the Talmud was never completed. ... The final edition of the Talmud may be compared to the stages of maturity of a living organism; like a tree, it has reached a certain form that is not likely to change substantially, although it continues to live, grow, proliferate. Although the organism has taken on this final form, it still produces new shoots that draw sustenance from the roots and continue to grow ... [The Talmud] is the collective endeavor of the entire Jewish people. Just as it has no one protagonist, no central figure who sums up all discussions and subjects, so it has continued throughout the centuries to be part of a constant creative process.

There is a single sentence in the foreoing description which is—eschewing itical or interpretive subtlety, playfulness, etorical chicanery—a plain whopping lie n the face of it. I will come back to put a nger on it very soon.

First, though, let us suppose—bringing the supposition the vigilant Jewish menlity developed in the aftermath of mass ss—let us suppose that a group of ewish scholars uncovers an egregious historical instance of wholesale Jewish excision. The historical instance is open, obvious, in everyone's plain sight, and has always been; but we have averted our eyes. The excision has barely been noticed, and among Jewish scholars and guardians of culture (whom the excision most affects) has not been noticed at all.

The nature of the excision is this: a great body of Jewish ethical thinkers, poets, juridical consciences—not merely one generation but many; in short, an entire intellectual and cultural organism—has been deported out of the community of Jewish culture, away from the creative center. Not "deported" in the Nazi sense of being taken away to perish, nor in the sense of being deprived of natural increase, but rather in the sense of isolation, confinement away from the main stage of Jewish communal achievement.

And this isolation, this confinement, this shunting off, is one of the cruelest events in Jewish history. It has excised an army of poets, thinkers, juridical figures; it has cut them off and erased them. It is as if they were born to have no ancestry and (despite natural increase) no progeny. They have been expunged as cleanly, as expertly, as the most thoroughgoing pogrom or Inquisition imaginable: an Inquisition designed to rid the Jewish people of a mass of its most vital and vitally contributing and participating minds. And all, it should be noted, sans bloodshed.

I began, you will have observed, with the words "let us suppose." But we need not suppose this melancholy history. It has already happened, generation after generation; and we know it, and have always known it (knowing is different from noticing); yet we, who weep at the loss of Jewish thinkers denied fulfillment through pogrom after pogrom, century after century—here, with regard to the one mass loss I speak of, we have always been stony-hearted. We are indifferent. We display nothing so much as an absence of grief at the loss. We have not even noticed it.

And there they are—rank after rank of lost Jewish minds: Jewish minds whose books were not burned; rather, they were never in possession of books to begin with.

When Adin Steinsaltz, the eminent contemporary scholar and interpreter of Talmud, writes that the Talmud "is the collective endeavor of the entire Jewish people," he is either telling an active and conscious falsehood; or he has forgotten the truth; or he has failed to notice the truth. The truth is that the Talmud is the collective endeavor not of the entire Jewish people, but only of its male half.

Jewish women have been omitted—by purposeful excision—from this "collective endeavor of the Jewish people" which has "continued throughout the centuries to be part of a constant creative process."

A loss numerically greater than a hundred pogroms; yet Jewish literature and history report not one wail, not one tear.

A loss culturally and intellectually more debilitating than a century of *autos-da-fé*; than a thousand evil bonfires of holy books—because books can be duplicated and replaced when there are minds to duplicate and replace them, and minds cannot be duplicated and replaced; yet Jewish literature and history report not one wail, not one tear.

12: On Jewish Repair and Renewal

Although there has been a curious absence of grief over the mass loss of half the available Jewish minds, there begins now to be some nervous notice, some dry-hearted attempt at repair.

"We must encourage more women to enter fields of Jewish scholarship, where they will be able to assume positions of respect traditionally accorded to the scholar," my halachic scholar-acquaintance writes. At last—although it is clear it is a "we" admitting a "they" to the "collective endeavor." It is not yet a genuinely collective "we." Nor could it be, at so early a stage of recognition of the need for repair.

But what—in traditional congregations—are some of the suggestions for repair? They are, among others, *women's* Torah study groups, *women's minyanim* (prayer quorums), *women's* holiday celebrations. Repair through traditional activities under continuing segregation. Isolation goes on, but scholarly air is let in. This is plainly an improvement over the centuries-old habit of deportation out of study. The halachic scholar who advises these improvements considers them to be advances under the sheltering boughs of "the Torah's spirit and truth, the Divine Truth of Torah." And these suggestions, he points out—segregated study, segregated *minyanim*, segregated celebration—do not violate *halachah*, because they flow from the halachic premise of separation, which in turn flows from the notion that, in his words, "different rights and responsibilities do not necessarily imply inferior value."

Is study by women, now to be "encouraged," equal to study by men, or is it of inferior value? If it is not of inferior value, why is it to be kept apart? The same questions logically apply to prayer and celebration. When women are discouraged and isolated from the centers of study, prayer, and celebration (by virtue of certain categories of eligibility), then separation of the ineligible from the eligible makes, in its own frame, sense. (A circular kind of sense, however, since mostly it is the rule of separation itself which determines ineligibility!) But once eligibility for study is declared to be universal regardless of sex, then what rationale continues to impose isolation? It is a detriment to study when good minds are kept apart.

Return for a moment to Steinsaltz's discussion:

> *One of the great Talmudic commentators, the Maharsha, often ended his commentaries with the word* vedok *(continue to examine the matter). This exhortation is an explicit admission that the subject has not been exhausted and that there is still room for additions and arguments on the question. To a certain extent the whole Talmud is rounded off by this* vedok*, the injunction to continue the search, to ask, to seek new aspects of familiar problems.*

If recent history has made us vulnerable to grief over mass loss; if we consider how we ourselves have amputated from the Jewish cultural body so many philosophers, historians, poets, scholars; if we reflect on the excision of generation after generation of Jewish students (we who are so proud of our joy in study, of our reverence for holy study!); if Jews in their full, not amputated collectivity, are drawn in awe to "the Torah's spirit and truth," then why do the sincerest scholars of Torah appear to offer Jewish women stopgap tactics, tinkerings, placebos and sops, all in the form of further separation and isolation?

These recommendations for study and prayer within a frame of continuing segregation fail to address the one idea that calls out to be addressed. They are not solutions arrived at by means attentive to the Maharsha's injunction toward *vedok*, toward continuing to examine the matter; they are, instead, obstacles to examining the matter; they are evasions of the matter. They are the very opposite of "a constant creative process," which can never proceed through evasion, but must endure a head-on wrestling with the sinew of the dispute.

The deepest sinew of the dispute concerns the premise that has, up to and including our time, deported women out of the houses of study: "Different rights and responsibilities do not necessarily imply inferior value."

It is that premise which needs search, examination, renewed scrutiny—because everything follows from it, and to tinker with its consequences is to evade the very essence of one of the most urgent Jewish questions of our generation: the loss of an army of Torah-scholars. If *halachah* aids in suppressing the scholars who can grow to create it, that is a kind of self-decimation. If the Jewish communal conscience continues to amputate half its potential scholarship, that is akin to cultural self-destruction. When half the brain is idling, the other half is lame.

Until Jewish women are in the same relation to history and Torah as Jewish men are and have been, we should not allow ourselves ever again to indulge in the phrase "the Jewish genius." There is no collective Jewish genius. Since Deborah the Prophet we have not had a collective Jewish genius. What we have had is a Jewish half-genius. That is not enough for the people who choose to hear the Voice of the Lord of History. We have been listening with only half an ear, speaking with only half a tongue, and never understanding that we have made ourselves partly deaf and partly dumb.

13: Footnote: An Objection to the Foregoing, From the View of the "Pious"

It is so foolish one wants to omit it. Still, might as well be mentioned: a pious view of women is that they are dangerous temptations to men. A man cannot sit nea a woman—not for prayer, not for study—because he is inherently weak and she will arouse him sexually: he will be "distracted."

The woman, on the other hand, is not considered to be a sexual creature, easily aroused or "distracted" when close to males. At the same time, a woman in public is regarded solely as a sexual provocation.

(The apologists for walling in women claim the wall in traditional synagogues is to protect men from their own weakness. But if the wall is made necessary by a mal deficiency [which women are said not to share], then why are the males not walled in? Logically, it ought to be the sick who are confined, not the well.)

Much of the vast structure of Jewish segregation of the sexes rests on the fear of male temptation; on the so-called weakness of males in the face of "distraction."

Yet all Jewish practice requires restrain dedication, and concentration. A Jew restrains himself from following the eating of meat with the drinking of milk. He restrains himself from driving a car on the Sabbath, or putting on an electric light, or carrying money. Clearly, this is not the place to draw up a list of all the things a Jew restrains himself from doing; but anyone who knows even a little of the life of observant Jews is aware of how very long that list would be.

Is an observant Jew, whose life is nearly defined by the practice of restraint, more libidinous creature than other males?

In the secular American community, we see conferences of physicians, chemists, writers, teachers, etc., where males and females sit next to one another discussing the merits of an argument, and the males are not prevented from, nor suspected of, "distraction" by physical walls of separation. Non-Jewish males and non-observant Jewish males—who do not have the benefit of the observant Jewish male's dai regimen of self-restraint—are able to study side by side with women, apparently with sufficient concentration. Indeed, this is a premise of almost the entire American university system.

Is the pious Jewish male more subject than other males to sexual arousal under inappropriate conditions?

In fact, observant Jewish men are without doubt better prepared than others for sexual self-restraint, and it is not pious Jewish males who are weak in the face of women—only their arguments.

. *Seven Conclusions for the ttention of the Traditional abbinate*

1. The question of the status of the wish woman is not "theological." To er the status of the Jewish woman is not change one iota of the status of Jewish lief.

2. Therefore the question of the status Jewish women is "merely" a sociological ue.

3. As a sociological issue, the status women is the consequence of human cisions amenable to repair by human titutions.

4. In order to satisfy the most tradi- nal members of the community, and also place the responsibility for injury where it ost belongs, the repair must emerge out *halachah*, the juridical machinery for ange.

5. The difficulty has been not that nciples of *halachah* are being applied, t precisely that they are *not* being plied.

6. As a result of halachic inaction, wish life is in a condition of internal, self- licted injury, and justice is not being ne.

7. It is the most traditional elements of e community who should set the example the rest in doing justice. Why? Because s they who make the claim of being ost in the mainstream of authentic Jewish pression; of being most representative of storic Jewish commitment; and finally it they who dedicate themselves to being odels for Jews who are less stringent in iving to live conscientiously within the me of Torah.

The burden of leadership in repairing ury rests with those who are a) most sponsible for the injury; b) most in pos- ssion of the means of repair, i.e., *lachah*; and c) most conscientious as acticing Jews.

15: But Suppose the Question Is *Sacral?* *The Missing Commandment; The Two Walls of Scandal*

Sometimes I feel ashamed. The problem—the status of Jewish women—shames me with its seeming triviality, its capacity to distract, its insistent sociological preoccupation, its self-centeredness, its callous swerve away from all those hammer-blows dealt to the Jewish people as a whole.

Especially after lifting my eyes, as, a few moments before undertaking this paragraph, I have done, from documents and meditations which concern themselves with the Great Destruction that came on us in Europe between the years 1933 and 1945—especially then, I smart under the apparent hollowness of this theme. And it is not only by comparison with the worst that this sense of hollow triviality is aroused. There are other walls, more recently erected, that contrive to shut off, and justifiably, thinking-about-women-as-Jews: the continuing brutalities in the Soviet Union; the active resurgence of anti-Semitism in England, Germany, and France; the stunning erosion of American moral urgency toward Israel; the shock of discovering nests of self-designated Nazi groups in every major American city; above all the assault of commotion, danger and dilemma tirelessly impinging, always and always, on Israel—confronted with all of these, how small, how indulgent, how without large meaning, how shallow and weak the question seems!

The desire to raise it, in the shadow of all these desolating anxieties, strikes one as a scandal: as a thick wall of scandal between oneself and the priorities of Jewish interest.

And yet there is another scandal. This second scandal has an even greater capacity to shock. It is a second wall, huger and thicker still, immensely high and powerfully built, that throws its shadow across the whole of Jewish history. If the first wall seems to separate Jews from necessity, this second wall is even more dangerous: it separates Jews from the Covenant.

The second wall must be scaled by everyone who has dissented from the drift of all my remarks so far. Up to this point, in these *Notes Toward Finding the Right Question*, I have taken the position that the issue of the status of Jewish women flows from societal, not sacral, sources. But suppose this position is dead wrong? And suppose the opponents of this position, who believe that the status of women is in fact a sacral question, are right?

Clearly it would be narrow-minded, as well as metaphysically risky, not to pay close attention to those who insist that one cannot look at the question of women without the imperative of looking simultaneously into the profoundest intent, deeper than social practice merely, of Torah itself.

And clearly one cannot reflect on the meaning of Torah without also reflecting on justice and injustice.

What is injustice? We need not define it. Justice must be defined and redefined, but not injustice. How to right a wrong demands ripe deliberation, often ingenuity. But a wrong needs only to be seen, to be seen to be wrong. Injustice is instantly intuited, felt, recognized, reacted to. That there is injustice with regard to women is well understood; otherwise there would be, to take only three illustrations centuries apart, no *chalitzah*, no *ketubah*, and no current agitation over *agunah*.

The fact that injustice can be instantly identified raises a strange question. Each of the great offenses is recognized and dealt with in the broadest way in the Decalogue by means of a single all-encompassing "Thou shalt not." But the Decalogue is silent about the status of women except insofar as women are perceived as part of the web of ownership. We are not told not to covet our neighbor's husband; a husband is not property. And the injunction against adultery, while applying to both women and men, is to protect husbands from theft. But just as "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife" is a refinement of "Thou shalt not commit adultery," so are both of these refinements of "Thou shalt not steal."

In the most fundamental text and texture of Torah, the status of women, except insofar as women are defined as property, is not recognized as an offense or an injustice.

So the question arises: if, in the most fundamental text and texture of Torah, the lesser status of women is not worthy of a great "Thou shalt not," then perhaps there is nothing inherently offensive in it, then perhaps there is no essential injustice, then perhaps the common status of women is not only sanctioned, but, in fact, divinely ordained?

Yet, if this were so, why are there any attempts at all in rabbinic history to repair the status of women? It is as if the Oral Law is saying to the Written Law: *there is something missing*. In fact, whoever believes that the Oral Law is implicit in the Torah is already saying that something is missing: obviously if the missing element

were explicit, the Oral Law would not have to derive it.

What we receive through Torah is the eternality and immutability of certain moral principles, beyond social custom and even despite nature.

When we accept this standard—that Torah gives precepts for the elevation of humanity—as endemic in Torah, and when we posit the giving of such precepts even as a kind of general definition of Torah, as in effect the essence of Torah, we run into a wall of scandal.

Consider: murder, robbery, false witness, abuse of the elderly, adultery, and a thousand other examples of victimization and dehumanization fill our planet. There is no moment when the Commandments are not applicable. "Thou shalt not steal" is timeless, no matter how the social and economic and political orders have changed or will change. No argument from progress or modernity can efface the force of "Thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt not steal" carries within it the blinding clarity of simple justice in the face of simple injustice. No matter how high the wall of property rises around the clear principle of "Thou shalt not steal," no matter how dusty the cloud of *pilpul* (disputation) that may through various imaginable systems obscure it, the precept can be discerned at the center, untampered-with, untainted, unmolested, clear, pure, with the force of timelessness. The precepts of Torah criticize the world and sit in judgment on its ways.

Of course, Torah is not always alone in acknowledging timeless moral principles. Other religions, including those which are not Torah-derived, make some of the same acknowledgments. But Torah *is* alone in asserting the timelessness of the Sabbath as a day set aside for the elevation of humanity. Nature does not recognize the Sabbath; to nature, all the days are alike. And it may be that, to nature, every act is alike: do the laws of biology distinguish between the cessation of breath in a sheep the wolf has just killed, and the cessation of breath in a man the murderer has just killed and robbed?

So, with regard to moral principle, and also with regard to the Sabbath and other days delimited for sacral and moral purposes, it is no use saying, "Well, but the world isn't like this." The *point* of the Commandments is that the world isn't like them, that the Commandments are contrary to the way the world really is. That is why we value them; that is how they come to elevate us above merciless nature and unjust social usage. It is because Torah makes us and our usages different and separate from the way things appear to be given, that we have found meaning in being human.

How, then, does all this relate to a wall of scandal? It would seem that, in every instance, Torah can be trusted to say its timeless and holy "Thou shalt not" to the lenient, cruel, and careless indifference of both society and nature—to the way human beings unmediated by conscience behave, and even to the continuum of conscienceless nature as it passes through its undifferentiated days.

With one tragic exception. In one remarkable instance only there is lacking the cleansing force of "Thou shalt not," and the abuses of society are permitted to have their way almost unchecked by Torah.

With regard to the condition of women, we speak of "the abuses of society"—but these abuses are so wideflung on our planet that they seem, by their undeviating pervasiveness, very nearly to have the sanction of nature. If we look only into Torah, we see that the ubiquitousness of women's condition applies here as well, with as much force as elsewhere. Women's quality of lesser-ness, of otherness, is laid down at the very beginning, as a paradigm and as a rule: at the start of the Creation of the World woman is given an inferior place. In Scripture, it is true, whenever we hear her speak in her own voice, she is uttering a protest against being put upon: Sarah arguing with Abraham, for instance, over Hagar, or Zelophehad's daughters arguing with Moses over their inheritance. In each case G-d is moved by injustice, and enjoins both Abraham and Moses to redress the abuse. In both accounts the injustice-contradicting texture of Torah prevails over the offenses of the ruling social order.

But mostly the social order as given—woman dehumanized, woman as inferior, woman as chattel—remains untouched by the healing force of any grand principle of justice. Probably the worst Scriptural instance is the drinking of the bitter waters, the trial-by-ordeal for a woman suspected of adultery. If there are no more bitter waters for women to drink, if trial-by-ordeal, a commonplace of the ancient world, has been allowed to lapse into disuse, it is because the rabbis, after the Destruction of the Temple, applied the injustice-contradicting impulse of Torah to the social order as given.

Many of the disabilities of women in the given social order have been related to property; women themselves have been regarded as property; and often enough the desire for property clashes with justice as plainly seen. And on occasion justice-carrying Torah has been rabbinically applied to the world-as-given—as, for instance, when polygamy was banned, and before that by some centuries, when the levirate law that forced a woman to marry her husband's brother was ceremoniously circumvented. The *ketubah* (marriage contract) was instituted for the protection of women, the emphasis being, of course, on the protection of the legally lesser by the legally greater.

Citing such examples, Judith Hauptman, a teacher of Talmud at the Jewish Theological Seminary, is moved to apologetics:

> *... we renounce the view held by many, both men and women, that the Jewish tradition, having been shaped by men, is totally biased in their favor. It was the Rabbis, members of the very class of people who were more equal than others, who voluntarily extended some of their privileges to those who were not so fortunate.*

But the difference between justice and injustice is that justice is a requirement, a Commandment, not a voluntary ceding of privilege; while injustice is presided over by tyranny, and tyranny is sometimes, though never consistently or reliably, benevolent. To honor "the very class of people who were more equal than others" for *the leniency of their tyranny over women* is to honor injustice.

On the whole, it turns out, the status of women under Torah is not remarkably or radically different from the status of women in the world at large. And when we consider the world at large, what we see is steady and incontrovertible. A society of Amazons and primeval matriarchs is a fantasy, a myth, one of those wishful dreams that result in sphinxes and gryphons and that inner universe of poetical fancy against which Torah turns its face. As far as we can tell, history, archaeology, and anthropology combine to persuade us that in every place, in every time, in every tribe women have been set aside as lesser, and in that assumption of inferiority have suffered dehumanization: because inferiority, dehumanization.

When so-called "progressive elements" in Jewish religious life call for change on the ground that "times are different now," "those were ancient practices," "what applied then doesn't apply in our modern society today," "the religious participation of women is an idea whose time has come," and so forth, one can only shrug at the smallness and irrelevance of such comments. They do not grow out of justice, rather, out of the texture of injustice-contradiction; they come out of the impulse for alleviation that the strong arbitrarily offer to the lesser—the benevolence of tyranny. Such views are, like the *ketubah* its period, green vines growing on the wall of scandal. One is glad enough to see

een growth and life at any time, but one uld rather not have to endure the weight d presence and shadow of the wall at all. e difference between justice and allevia- n is similar to the difference between tice and injustice: alleviation is a now- d-then thing, and justice is forever and mutable, neither age-bound nor society- und. Alleviation is what nowadays is metimes called "situation ethics," an ad c poultice applied to a particular wound; t justice is a cure, and obviates the need partial measures. Wherever justice zes, apologetics vanish.

What Torah has occasionally offered (as the case of Moses and the daughters of ophehad, as in the case of the rabbis o abrogated the levirate law and con- ved of the *ketubah*) is alleviation. What, ong the urgencies of the deeper moral , would this be equivalent to? It would equivalent to having a jerry-built set of metimes applicable, sometimes inappli- ble circumstances in which thievery, say, uld not be allowed. Instead of the now- d-again alleviation of the worst effects of every, we have the thunderous once-and- -all Commandment: "Thou shalt not al." Instead of alleviation for the victim robbery, in short, we have a grand, high, re, uncompromising, singular principle of al justice. A precept.

Why did "Thou shalt not steal" come o being? It came into being because in ery place, in every time, in every tribe, en or now, whatever the social or nomic or political order, there have been eves. It came into being because it was cessary to set a precept against the-way- e-world-ordinarily-is.

And that is the salient meaning of rah, to give precepts against the-way- e-world-ordinarily-is.

With, as I have said, a single tragic ception. We look at the-way-the-world-is th regard to women, and we see that men are perceived as lesser, and are reby dehumanized. We look into Torah th regard to women, and we see that men are perceived as lesser, and are reby dehumanized. Torah, in this one tance, and in this instance alone, offers precept to set against the-way-the- rld-ordinarily-is. There is no mighty hou shalt not lessen the humanity of men!" to echo downward from age to e. There is no immutable moral principle countermand what humankind will do if to the willfulness and negligence and ifference and callousness of its restraint.

This is the terrifying wall of scandal built within the tower of Torah itself. In creating the Sabbath, Torah came face to face with a nature which says, "I make no difference among the days." And Torah made a difference among the days. In giving the Commandment against idolatry, Torah came face to face with a society in competition with the Creator. And Torah taught the Unity of the Creator. In making the Commandment against dishonor of parents, Torah came face to face with merciless usage of the old. And Torah ordained devotion to parents. In every instance Torah strives to teach No to unrestraint, No to victimization, No to dehumanization. The Covenant is a bond with the Creator, not with the practices of the world as they are found in actuality.

With one tragic exception. With regard to women, Torah does not say No to the practices of the world as they are found in actuality; here alone Torah confirms the world, denying the meaning of its own Covenant.

This wall of scandal is so mammoth in its centrality and its durability that, contemplating it, I can no longer believe in the triviality of the question that asks about the status of Jewish women. It is a question which, reflected on without frivolity, understood without arrogance, makes shock itself seem feeble, makes fright itself grow faint. The relation of Torah to women calls Torah itself into question. Where is the missing Commandment that sits in judgment on the world? Where is the Commandment that will say, from the beginning of history until now, *Thou shalt not lessen the humanity of women?*

If it were shown to us that we might have had a Commandment ordering the Sabbath-day, but that Torah failed to give it to us in our great need, we would not for a moment accept such a premise; we would cry out, "But of course there is a Sabbath! How can it be otherwise under the Covenant!" It seems unthinkable to imagine a week without the Sabbath; it is unspeakable to imagine a Torah that did not give us the Sabbath.

But suppose it were so. Suppose the Sabbath-Commandment were missing. Perhaps then we would look into Torah to try to invent a Sabbath for ourselves. This mind-play is not so fantastic or offensive as it may at first sound—we have a vigorous paradigm. When the Temple was destroyed, we did not languish or die. Instead, lacking Jerusalem, we came to Yavneh, and invented the Synagogue in order to save Torah—to preserve it and to transmit it. When Torah seemed frayed, we ran to repair it.

That is our present condition with regard to women. It is as if a Commandment of the stature and holiness of the Sabbath-Commandment were lacking. It is not a fantasy or an imagining to say that Torah is silent, offers no principle of justice in relation to women, no timeless precept of injustice-contradiction, and in general consorts with the world at large. Torah does not make a judgment in this instance; it consorts. The Covenant is silent about women; the Covenant consorts with the world at large. The Covenant does not make a judgment; it consorts. With regard to women, the Commandment separating Torah from the world is the single missing Commandment. Torah—one's heart stops in one's mouth as one dares to say these words—Torah is in this respect frayed.

So what we must do is find, for this absent precept, a Yavneh that will create the conditions for the precept.

The Oral Law, with its rabbinic piecemeal repairs, is the first to inform us that such a precept is implicit though absent—otherwise whence would the Oral Law derive its repairs?

There was no Commandment that said, "When the time comes, go and preserve Torah through Yavneh." But when that was done, when we came to Yavneh and devised means and purpose to preserve Torah through our long Exile, we saw that what we had done was in accord with the Covenant, and in fact showed itself in all clarity to be the voice of the Covenant.

The Destruction of the Temple—the Temple that seemed fundamental to Torah—appeared to call Torah itself into question; there was no ready precept for that barren moment; and what was our response? To strengthen Torah by discovering the strengthening precept.

The dehumanized condition of women within Torah appears to call Torah itself as a source of precept into question; the precept is missing; and what then shall our response be? To strengthen Torah; to contradict injustice; to create justice, not through the fragmentary accretions of *pilpul* but through the cleansing precept of justice itself; so that ages hence, our progeny will look back on us as we look back on Yavneh; and they will be able to say, as we say of that other green growth out of barrenness, "What was done was done in accordance with the voice of the Covenant."

To do this is necessary—but it is not necessary for the sake of a more harmonious social order; it is least of all necessary for the sake of "modern times"; it is not necessary for the sake of women; it is not even necessary for the sake of the Jewish people. It is necessary for the sake of Torah; to preserve and strengthen Torah itself.

Cynthia Ozick, novelist and short-story writer, has most recently written *A Pagan Rabbi and Other Stories* and *Trust*.

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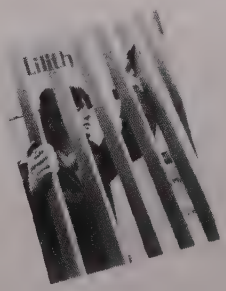

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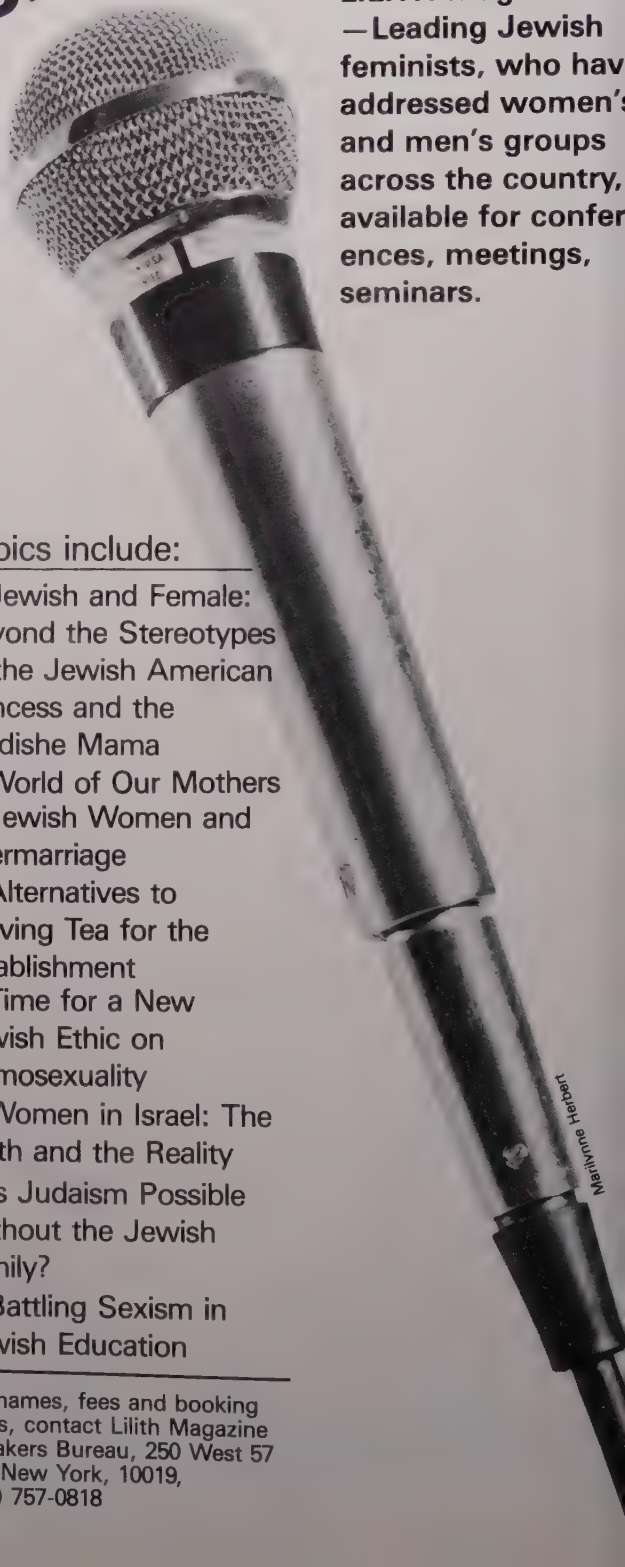

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A Short Story
by Nessa Rapoport

The Woman Who Lost Her Names

She was named after her grandmother, Sarah, a name no one else had then because it was considered old-fashioned. Eight days after the naming her father's brother died, and they gave her a middle name. The brother was Yosef—Joseph—so her mother went down to City Hall, Bureau of Births and Deaths, and Josephine was typed in the space after Sarah. "A name with class," her Aunt Rosie said. Sarah hated it.

When she got to school the kindergarten teacher sent home a note. The family read it together, sitting around the kitchen table. "Dear Mrs. Levi, we have decided to call the child Sally for the purpose of school as it will help integrate her and make the adjustment easier."

"What's to adjust?" the brother next to her asked.

"Shah," her father said.

Her father was a gentle man, remote, inaccessible. The books that covered the tables and chairs in his small apartment were the most constant factor in his daily life, and the incongruity of raising seven Orthodox children in the enlightened secularism of the Upper West Side never penetrated his absorption in Torah. Sarah grew up next to the families of Columbia intellectuals who were already far enough from Europe to want to teach their children civilization. The girls in her class had radios, then TVs, then nose jobs and contact lenses. They grew more graceful in their affluence, and she grew a foot taller than all of them, early. There were many blond girls in her class each year, and she'd stare at their fair delicate arms whose hair was almost invisible. "Sally, how does your garden grow?" the boys would pass her in the hall, staring at her breasts, the thick dark hair covering her arms to her wrists, the wild hair that sprung from her head independent of her. She'd look down at herself, her bigness, ungainly, and think "peasant, you peasant" to herself and the grandmother who'd bequeathed her these outsized limbs. No one would fall in love with her.

Her mother was fierce, intense, passionately arguing, worrying about people, disdainful. "She married for money," "he could have been a scholar," indicting these neighbors who were changing their names, selling their birthright. "Sarele," she'd suddenly gather her in her arms late at night when her brothers were sleeping, "remember who you are and you'll have yourself. No matter what else you lose—." She never finished the sentence. Sarah would look into her mother's face, full of shadows, ghosts, and touch the cheek that was softer than anything. "You're a big girl, Sarah," her mother shook herself free, always, "go to bed." Her mother would sit at the

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kitchen table alone, head in her hands, thinking. Once long past midnight Sarah saw her that way, shaking her head between her clenched fingers, and tiptoed in to say, "Mama, I understand." Her mother looked up, uncomprehending.

When she was seventeen and had given up hope she suddenly bloomed. Her hair calmed down, and a kind of beauty emerged from under her skin. The boys in her youth movement started to talk to her after meetings, inviting her places. First she said no, then she believed them and went gladly to rallies, campfires, lectures to raise money for the new state of Israel. She dreamed of Israel often, dancing the folk dances in the orange groves of her imagination, fighting malaria, drowning in jasmine. None of the boys touched her heart.

At school boys were thinking of college, and girls were thinking of boys. Graduation came on a hot day in June, and her parents watched her get a special award in poetry, poems she had written that no one but the teacher would ever read. "Poetry, Sarale," her father was pleased. "My dreamer," her mother whispered. "We have a surprise for you. From Israel," the word was still strange to her mother's tongue.

Yakov Halevi was her cousin, a first cousin from Jerusalem she'd never met. He got up to greet her from the couch in her parents' living room, the room reserved for company, and she watched his thin energized frame spring forward. He was meant to be dressed in black like the rest of her cousins whose pictures she'd seen in her mother's hand, sidecurls swaying in an overseas wind. But his hair was short, startling, red, and the hair of his chest showed in his open-neck shirt. He spoke seriously, with a heavy accent, and she loved to watch the words form in his mouth before he released them. Yakov was a poet, only twenty and known already for his fervent lines. Great things were expected of him, and he carried their weight on his narrow Hebrew shoulders. Her Bible knowledge wasn't enough, and she struggled with the new language to read his book, tracing the letters of the title page, alarmed: Jerusalem Fruit, by Yakov Peniel.

"Who's Peniel?" she asked him. "Why did you change your name?"

"I didn't change it, I lost it," he laughed. "When the editor wrote to me accepting my poems he had to ask my name, for I hadn't sent it. *'Hagidah na shmekha.'* he wrote, what Yakov our forefather asked when he wrestled the angel. 'Why is it that you ask my name?' I wrote back, as the angel answered, and he published me under the name Yakov gave that place—Peniel."

"But your letters come to you in that name. How did it happen?"

He shrugged. "People wanted to meet the bright young poet, Peniel. Then I was asked to talk, introduced that way. On the street they would say 'That's Peniel,' and so it came to be."

"But you're the tenth generation of Jerusalem Halevis. You can't give it up, it's your name."

"Just a name," he smiled. "The soul underneath is the same, in better and worse."

She loved that humility, and the heart of Eretz Yisrael she heard pounding in his chest when he held her. He loved her and loved her America. "It's not mine," she'd insist, "I don't belong here." But he stood in the middle of New York looking up. "So big," he would cry in his foreign tongue. "So big."

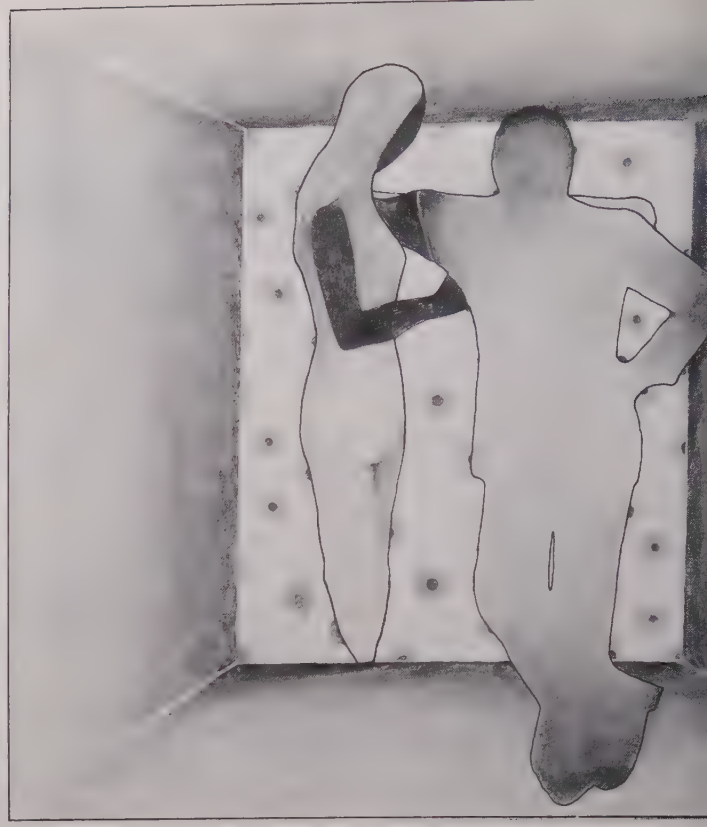
He wanted to cross the country sea to sea, to marvel at mountains and chasms. She had waited so long to go home, to Israel, she could wait a little longer. Then he was her home, she became him, she loved every bone of his self, every line. The words of his mouth were her thoughts, what he touched she found worthy. It thrilled her, their sameness, and she'd wake in the mornings eager for the coming confirmations. They would say the same things at one time, and reach for each other, marvelling. She wasn't alone anymore, she had found a companion. When she tried to explain about the Upper West Side and the girls in her class he would say, "Every one is alone. Man is alone before God, that's our state." Hearing him say it bound her even more. She wanted to breathe his breath, use his language, and searched through his poems, word after word, for her hidden presence.

"My muse," he sorted her hair, "Sarale," saying it the old Jewish way as he'd heard his mother, also a Sarah, being called.

They knew they would marry, she floated for months on that knowledge, walking down Broadway to the rhythm of Solomon's Songs. "Sarale," Yakov drew her to him one night. "We must talk of the name."

"It's OK. I don't mind Peniel. It's better in a way than Halevi, which is almost my name. No one would know I was married."

"It's the other name—Sarah. My mother's name. A man cannot marry



a woman with his mother's name."

She turned white. "A man cannot marry?"

He noticed her face. "Oh no no, he can marry, but she, she m change the name."

She said in relief, "But what name? Sarah was my name."

"Do you have a middle name?"

She scowled. "Josephine."

"A *goyische* name, Josephine. So what do we do?"

She thought for a while. "I don't know. Josephine is Josie, but that's good."

"Jozzi," it was clumsy, "Jozzi. There is no Jozzi in Hebrew."

She had no suggestion.

"Wait," he told her. "Jozzi is Joseph, Yosef, is that right?"

She nodded.

"Well then it's Yosefah. Yosefah," he tried it on. The Hebrew sour spun in the air. "Yosefah," he turned her around and around till the tr flew in front of her, dizzy.

They married in spring and all summer they travelled as he fell in lo with America. He loved New York City, the place where they'd started, fingered the wheat of Midwestern fields, and stood on a rock high ov the ocean as if he'd discovered the water. In the evenings and as she wo up he was scribbling. Poems, letters, stories poured from his hands. She amazed as the papers grew and multiplied in hotel rooms, in the trunk the car. The strange Hebrew letters leaped from the pages, keeping th secrets against her straining will. "Are you writing of me?" she wanted know. He smiled, "They are all of you." He told her he sometimes to phrases she said and transplanted them into his work. She was grateful a mystified, peering through the foreign marks for herself, not findi resemblance.

Yearning for Israel they moved to New York. He studied sm Talmudic matters on which great things depended. She had a son, th another. The boys laughed and cried with her all day, alone in the hou surrounded by papers, and books of ancient cracked binding. When finished his doctorate they would live in Israel, and she counted the d as they lengthened to months, alone with her children and the fiercen of her desire. She was America to him, aspiring to be free, and he env her readiness to leave such abundance behind. "It's your home," he tried soften her, frightened by her single burning.

"It has nothing to do with me," she'd deny. He trembled in the face seduction—the grandness of America's gestures, hundreds of pla crossed by rivers whose opposite shores were too far to see.

"We must leave," he said. "We must go."

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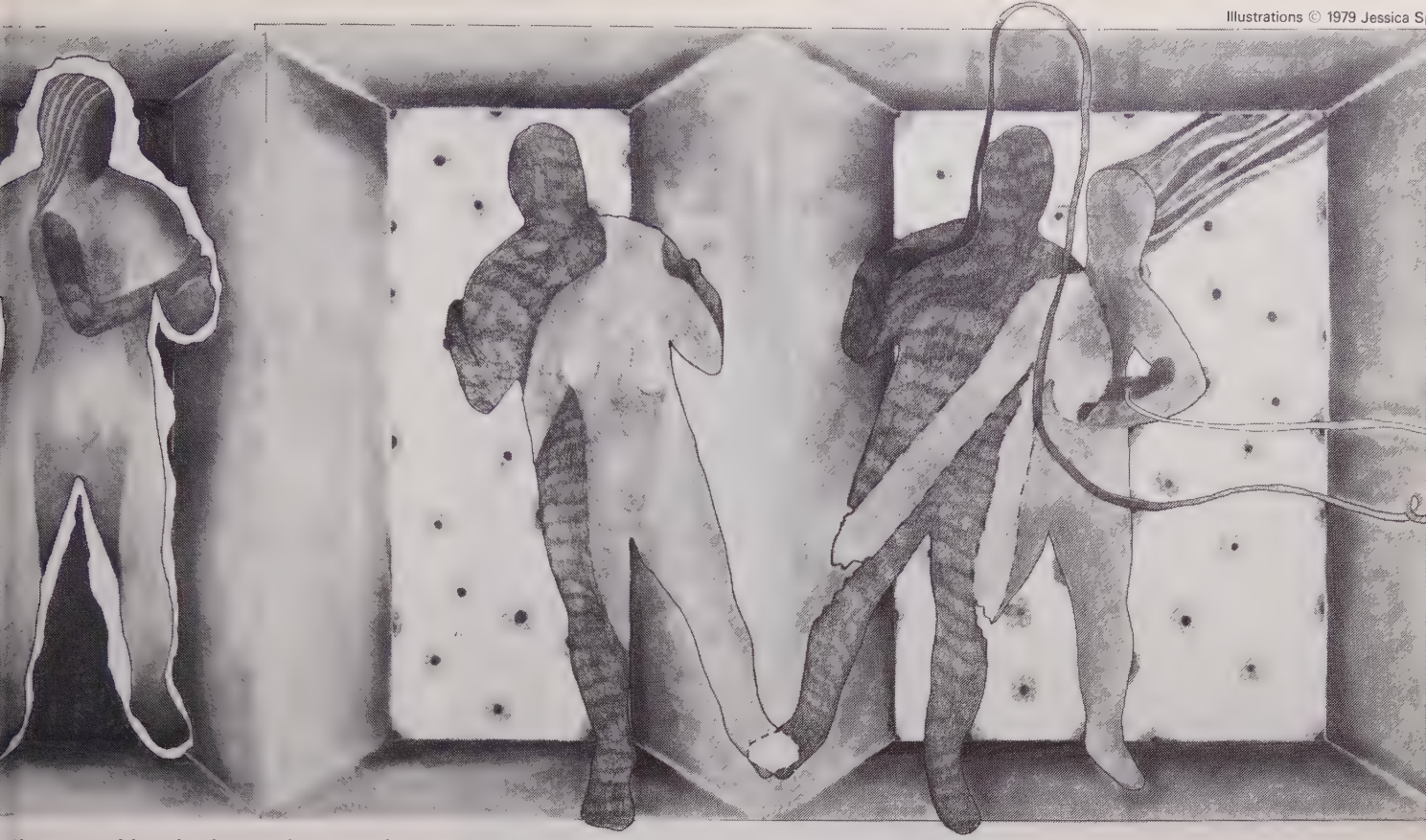

She stopped her daydream of years and started to pack. The boat left winter, and the grey piers of New York, city of her birth but not her ath, she was sure, were left behind her, unmourned. He stood watching e gap of water widen, then turned to her and was thankful.

There were cypress and palm trees, travelling in, and a perfume avier than air. Jerusalem approached them at twilight, her gold roofs and mes aching for heaven. She recognized the city as a lover, missing past ne, a shock of remembrance that stirred her body like a child. The boys ere crying, tired, afraid, and she sheltered them under the sleeves of her at, "We are home."

Jerusalem was designed for the world to come more than for now, and e washed, cleaned, shopped, scrubbed over and over again, as the dust ew in the summer and the winter wind seeped through the cracks. The ys got sick, and well, and she was sick in the morning, pregnant with e next child. Yakov laughed as he smoothed her hair. "A girl, a *maidele* xt."

From America letters came. A brother was hired, her mother was sick, unt Rosie was worried, family troubles, her mother was sick, Papa re- ed, a nephew converted, her mother was going, dying, gone. There was money for planes, and the pregnancy was hard, so half a world away e guarded her pain, talking to her mother in dreams about the coming ughter. Her mother, sitting now at a kitchen table that was not of the th, holding her head in her hands. Night after night she lay on her back, r stomach a dome in her arms.

When the child was born she could hardly know, groaning in a voice known to herself, stuffed between Arabs and old men in this not nerican hospital. Outside the war in Sinai was sending soldiers into her rd, and sending her into the hall and then home, almost before she uld stand. She bore the child alone, Yakov at the front, and when she oked down at her daughter, resting on her breast, she was full and at ace with this breathing body of her secret prayers, in love with the ld, flesh of her flesh, bone of her bone, not a stranger. Yakov came me, exhausted, off for three days to see her and rejoice in his daughter. nen he finally was there she stared from her bed unbelieving, two ones ed so dearly, both whole in limb. It was wondrous to her, and she ran r fingers up and down those tiny arms and legs hundreds of times. And kov, unmutilated, only tired, spoke to her saying, "We must give the ld a name."

"But I know the name," and she did, waiting for him to come home m the war, reading the Book of Psalms. "She is Ayelet Hashachar—the wn star."

Yakov smiled over her, indulgent, "This is not a name."

"This is the name," she said firmly. "Ayelet, Ayelet Hashachar, it's beautiful.

"Yes," he said gravely. "It is beautiful. But it's not the child's name. Yosefele," the smile, "your mother."

"My mother would love the name. She would love it," remembering her mother alone at the table dreaming her dreams long past midnight.

"Your mother was Dinsche," he told her, "and the child must be Dina. It is the Jewish way."

She looked at him, trying to find in herself some agreement, even a small accord and she'd bend to his will. But there was nothing.

"Yakov," she pleaded, "my mother won't care. I represent her, I know." Her mother holding her head in her hands. "It cannot be Dina. It can't be." Her voice was rising, new sounds that surprised her. "There's blood on that name."

She rose from the bed, "Look," and held out the Bible, shaking, to him. "Read," she tore through the page in her haste. "And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he seized her and lay with her and humbled her."

He stood before her in silence. "Rape," she said. "You want a daughter named for a rape."

"It is out of respect," he said. "For your mother. I don't understand what you want. A *goyische* name like Diana?" he asked. "If it's better we'll call her Diana."

"Ayelet Hashachar," she whispered in mourning, swaying like a rebbe in prayer.

"So what is it?" he asked.

"I don't care what you do," came the words in that voice, the one she had heard from herself giving birth. "Do what you want," turning her face to the wall.

He stroked her hair straight back from her forehead until finally she was asleep.

When the day of the naming arrived she was numb, jabbing the pins of her headcovering into her hair. She walked with her sons and her husband to the synagogue, and left them to climb the steps to the balcony for women. Below her the men were lifting the Torah, opening and closing it, dressing, undressing it, reading the day's portion. The people in the synagogue were singing quite loud, and some of the women sang too. The women around her moved their lips to the words. She stood still. She stood in her place, the place where the mothers always sat for their children. She closed her mouth, her lips pressed together, one on top of the other, and waited to hear her daughter's name.

A Book Essay
by Evelyn Torton Bec

I. B. Singer's Misogyny

Isaac Bashevis Singer, who recently won Nobel Prize for Literature, is the one author whom thousands of people the world over measure both Yiddish literature and Jewish ture. Unfortunately, readers who are unfam with Jewish history and culture may assu that Singer's portrayal of pre-war Polish Jewr an authentic representation of reality. It instead, a rather distorted picture of *shtetl* city life, reflecting fringe elements of that s ety rather than the norm.

Singer is not interested in the ordinary of the average Jew. His preoccupation with for example, was hardly characteristic of hard-working Jews of Eastern Europe, who to wage a daily struggle for mere survival. focus is not on the values or realities of Jew life but on the aberrations of human psyc ogy. Unlike nineteenth-century Jewish wri who, while critical of Jewish life, believed Jewish values and in the possibility of serving them, Singer is a pessimistic moder who believes all humans are essenti depraved.

While Singer presents men in terms of t individual psychological aberrations, he tr women as a class, making far more frequent of clichés and stereotypes in depicting th than in depicting men. Singer's visio combining the traditional Jewish image woman as subservient and inferior with misogynistic view of woman's nature in philosophies of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Fr and Weininger—represents a powerful ass on the Jewish woman.

Singer's thinking, epitomized in "Zeitl Rickel" is that "old maids, you know, also up half crazy. But when a woman who has a man is left alone, it goes to her head." result, in this Singer story, is a lesbian relat ship, which Singer views as the ultim aberration.

The strong, assertive, independent, or w Singer calls "mannish" women in the body his work all come to a bad end and inevita bring suffering not only on themselves but on those around them. Elka, the wife of Gim the Fool, is a rolling-pin wielder who

---

Evelyn Torton Beck is Associate Professor Comparative Literature, German and Women's St at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is th editor of a forthcoming collection of feminist essays i sociology of knowledge entitled The Prism of Sex. *has been teaching courses on Yiddish literature Jewish women for several years.*

Woodcut © 1979 Paula J. Goodman

s, and cuckolds her husband: "Her mouth
d open as if it were on a hinge and she had
rce tongue." The tragicomedy of her evil
vishness lies in what Singer sees as the
gful reversal of roles: "When you're mar-
he husband's the master," Gimpel reasons
ively.

he best known of these strong women,
tl the Yeshiva Boy," comes off relatively
in comparison to some of the others, but
here Singer hardly shows enthusiasm for
oung woman's remarkable intelligence. In
gnition of her capacity for and interest in
ing, her father quips:

"Yentl—you have the soul of a man."
"So why was I born a woman?"
"Even heaven makes mistakes."

er, who controls the narrative, seems fully
gree with this explanation. For all the
rent sympathy for Yentl's situation, her
nation to study in preference to mending
s is presented as if it were a kind of failing
.

he only genuinely positive images of
en—Teibele in "Short Friday" or Esther in
Magician of Lublin—are those who faithfully
out their traditional subsidiary roles and
te their lives entirely to the care of men,
natter what the cost to themselves. Singer's
ula seems to read: men serve God; women
men.

Who can understand the feminine soul? Even an angelic woman shelters within herself devils, imps, and goblins... It is all part of the perversity so characteristic of the female's nature.
(Shadow of a Crib)

or Singer, the natural perversity of women
hiefly in female sexuality, which he seems
gard as a natural "flaw" in women that
s a constant threat to men. They must ever
ct themselves against it.

he most persistent of Singer's stereotypes,
that almost subsumes all the others, is
an as temptress. (Of course, in a society
encouraged its men to become scholars
r than providers, women frequently
me the economic mainstays of their
ies, and not the sirens-in-search-of-sex that
r would have us believe.) In "The
ive," an elderly Circe-like woman tries to
ve the narrator/writer into faking her dead
and's memoirs.

She took my arm and pressed it to her body.
. A few times her leg brushed against mine.
. A sudden lust for that ugly creature seized me.

ince Singer does not seem able to see past
en's bodies, he presumes that they cannot
forget their own sexuality either, no matter
inappropriate the situation would appear
, nor what their age or occupation. Even
the woman is a poet engaged on a purely
ectual mission, as in "The Colony," she
ves lasciviously, as if such behavior were a female reflex to the presence of any male:

Sonya kept talking.... At the same time she patted, pinched, and pulled my hand; she even dug the nail of her index finger into it. The calf of her leg she pressed against mine.

Her behavior is described in terms that make the overture repellent; there is even the suggestion of sadism in the detail of nails digging into flesh: the woman's sexuality is an assault.

Reb Bunim also had a daughter, and women, as is well known, bring misfortune.
(Destruction of Kreshov)

Like so many other male writers, Singer sees the world as essentially male-centered and clearly views women as "other"—separate, subsidiary, apart, alien. He betrays a deep mistrust, revulsion and hostility toward women, especially those who stray in any way from their prescribed roles or cease to organize their lives around men.

Singer portrays women almost entirely as the sum total of their biological functions and in terms of their relationships (or lack of them) with men. He uses physical details of women's bodies as signposts of their personalities. In describing unattractive women—particularly older ones whose physical aging often seems to discredit them or make them seem absurd—there are always sagging, wrinkled breasts, grotesquely swollen bellies, female odors, and menopausal instability.

Whenever a woman fails to carry out her physiological destiny (remains a virgin too long, cannot conceive) it is presented as the woman's failing for which she can compensate only by showing extreme loyalty and support to her male partner.

In some stories, Singer equates sexuality with the world of demons who lie in wait for their human prey; the witch is a symbol of human depravity. It is useful to compare here the different treatment Singer accords witches of the two sexes: when men are witches, they are more often explicit incarnations of the devil; their evil comes from sources outside themselves. When women are evil, they seem to be depraved in their human essence. In spite of their greater capacity for evil, female witches have less power than male witches, and are all ultimately under the power of Satan himself. So man rules, even in the witch world.

As a witch, woman is given magical powers to heal but also to harm (midwife *and* abortionist); she is also, of course, accused of sexual aberrations. Cunegonde, in "The Destruction of Kreshov," is a good example of the witch type—isolated, old and ugly, the object of public scorn and suspicion, she is brutally killed by the angry fiancé of a woman she has ostensibly tried to help.

While Cunegonde, Hodle and other Singer witch figures are based in the *shtetl* and have their origin in traditional folk material, Singer also attributes witch-like characteristics to women in stories with a modern venue. For example, in "Alone," the Cuban caretaker of a deserted hotel in Miami is described as

a deformed creature ... with a hunched back, disheveled hair ... long hairy arms and crooked legs ... (who) stared at me intently,
as silent as a witch casting a spell.

In the flash of a sudden storm, this woman becomes "the witch crouched low like an animal ready to seize its prey."

Singer's males almost always seem helpless in these situations and are forever entangled with women's sexuality—obsessively, one might even say. The pattern that emerges most often in his stories has the central male figure or narrator caught in a web of his own making, trapped in relationships with several women, all of whom want him. Asa Heshel in *Family Moskat*, Herman Broder in *Enemies*, Yasha in *The Magician of Lublin* and, most recently, Aaron Greidinger in *Shosha* are prime examples.

Leib returned to his cherished vision: Rooshke lay there, dress up, legs stretched out, the knife in her stomach with only the metal handle sticking out.... He had been having a long dream, all about Rooshke, a strange one, for he had been slitting her throat and at the same time making love to her.
(Under the Knife)

Singer's men's arousal at women's sexuality and their inability (or unwillingness) to deal with their own feelings leads to hostility to women. Male anger at female sexuality is the theme of "Under the Knife," one of Singer's most savage stories. Here the protagonist plots revenge against his woman "for being too tough," that is to say, for jilting him. Even in *Shosha*, where the narrator ostensibly loves his childlike wife genuinely, the marriage initiation is a rape:

I awoke excited. I grabbed Shosha, and before she could even wake up, I mounted her. She choked and resisted. A stream of hot blood burned my thigh. I tried to pacify her but she broke out in a wail.... It was all out of love, I cried.

In so frequently associating male lust with violence toward women, Singer diverges most strongly from traditional Jewish life and comes closest to the Western pornographic imagination. While he does not go as far as to suggest that deep down all women actually want to be raped, he does seem to believe that women enjoy being victimized, degraded, and overpowered by men. The narrator of "A Quotation from Klopstock" boasts that "A few fiery slaps worked like a charm. After slaps she started to kiss. . . . I knew well how to manage my women." The protagonist of "The Briefcase" provides a good summary of this attitude: "I wronged everybody, but all these women continued to shower me with love." In "Blood," another of Singer's most brutal stories, Risha, applauding her lover's sexual prowess, uses the language of his trade (slaughtering): "You sure

murdered me that time." And in "The Dance," an abused wife becomes an abused mother after her husband dies:

> *I made myself a doormat for him. I suffered all his caprices. Even before he asked for something I gave it to him. Once when I handed him his slippers, he took one and smacked me in the face with it.* It was my fault. Not his.

In causing the victim to blame herself, Singer is not only creating a distorted image of the Jewish woman as emotional cripple. He is also granting license to her oppressor.

"We often drew [our] situations from your stories in the Yiddish papers. I wonder if you realize how much literature influences life."

As this quote from one of Singer's characters shows, the author is well aware that literature and life are mutually interdependent. For this reason, the images in a fictional world can never be dismissed simply as harmless creatures of the imagination. Unchallenged stereotypes help to keep groups in inferior positions, be they Jews in a gentile society or women in a patriarchy. But while American Jews have long recognized the power of art, and have unhesitatingly spoken out against novels and films that perpetuate derogatory images of Jews, they have remained disturbingly complacent when faced with similarly damaging stereotypes about women.

Singer seems to be responding favorably to the feminist challenge, at least on the level of official pronouncement. At a public lecture in New York City last fall, he went so far as to say that Judaism had made an "historical mistake" in not teaching women Torah, that the denial of women's rights had contributed to assimilation, that he welcomed giving Jewish women full religious rights in the synagogue (including *aliyot* and ordination), and that a reversal of this would be "wonderful for religion and justice." (*JTA, 11/8/78*)

As encouraging as such remarks may be, they nonetheless stand in stark contrast to Singer's most recent fictional writings, which continue to present the male/female dichotomy in unchanged sexist terms. While it is possible to explain this gap between the written and the spoken word as the result of the time lag between the two media, it seems more likely that this discrepancy is exactly what it appears to be—an unresolved contradiction.

Acknowledging that women have been deprived of their rights within Judaism is an essential step toward the creation of a changed consciousness. But it is only a beginning. For Singer to be able to portray women as full human beings, as subjects seen in relation to themselves and each other rather than as appendages or complements to men, would require a deeper re-vision and a determination to shed years of acculturation. We can only hope that in time, Singer will influence Singer, and that his theory and his practice will become more fully integrated.

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time the Council considered including women on its judging panel. *Published eminist authors should write to the Book Coun- g to be considered when next year's group of chosen.* The recent past has seen an enor- ncrease in criticism and authorship by women—and this should be reflected in ish Book Council's work. Their address East 26 St., New York, NY 10010, on: Dr. Sidney B. Hoenig, President, wish Book Council.

—Doris B. Gold

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... Contd. from Page 4.)

of adult Jewish women were
ed in Hadassah ....
" ...*we have fewer women*
g to become involved and do
ork than ever before. Fewer
en attend meetings and
ts." Hadassah does not func-
n a vacuum nor is it a mono-
organization. In some cities
Milwaukee, Ms. Lieberman's
ment may be accurate; in
s it is not. Nevertheless, for
ast two years, a Hadassah
mittee composed of top
rs has been working diligently
alyze and deal with problems
rated by changing demog-
, etc. ... We will certainly try.
re developing new channels
eaching members.

Ms. Lieberman's analysis of
ssah membership may be true
lwaukee. It certainly is not
of Cincinnati, Anaheim, Hous-
Atlanta, and scores of other
munities. Increasingly, Hadas-
members and leaders are
r people who may function
rently in relation to Hadassah
their mothers did, but who
onetheless deeply involved in
work.

"... *National Hadassah ex-*
es its membership throughout
country from the decision-
ing process. ..." Ms. Lieber-
you certainly are out of touch
Hadassah. Just last Septem-
convention delegates rejected
major recommendations of the
onal Board loudly and clearly.
happens in a democratic
nization. Rubber-stamping is a
uct of apathy and withdrawal
the decision-making process.
have little of that in Hadassah.

"*There is no formal process*
etting the Board to consider a
idea, nor for members to have
olution on rules considered by
Convention." Ms. Lieberman,
e have you been? Hadassah's
e structure is designed to
tate the democratic process..
ugh the years, discussion fol-
a chain—group, chapter,
n, national. Letters are
ved daily offering new ideas
onsideration. They are
ssed at national committee
tings and often by the National
d. ... The best, the most suc-
ful, the most workable ideas
from groups and chapters.
write; they propose them at
nal conferences; they flaunt
at national conventions. ...
gates are invited to submit
osals for resolutions.

"*Detailed administrative*
ets are not readily available.
Not so, Ms. Lieberman. The
ssah audit report is published
ally and is available on
est.

Re input into personnel poli-
n Israel: Hadassah personnel
ies in Israel are governed by
l's laws and customs. How-
let me give you one concrete example of constructive input on Hadassah's part. During the Yom Kippur War, a serious defect in the educational system became apparent. When all the men were serving in the army, there was an insufficient supply of personnel to carry on essential services because women had not been trained for technical jobs in sufficient numbers. The Hadassah National Board, whose members are elected, met in Jerusalem in January, 1974. They heard the report and acted swiftly. The curriculum of the Hadassah Seligsberg-Brandeis Comprehensive High School was altered to encourage more girls to pursue technical studies. The situation is now very different. [*See Israel news, p. 43 —Ed.*]

8. *"Does National ever ask the membership for an opinion about these issues?"* No, we do not, nor does anyone ask National's opinion. We are not members of the Israel labor unions. We do not make policy for the Israeli government or its institutions.

9. The substance of Hadassah's education material reflects the Hadassah charter and the Jerusalem Program. We welcome any and all suggestions. Please send us your ideas.

10. Hadassah is run by volunteer leaders. A Hadassah national president has a full-time job which requires daily attendance at her desk. The head or "director" of every department is a volunteer. We will welcome any suggestions which would help make it possible to give desk assignments to people who cannot come to the national office on a daily basis. Other organizations may function with part-time presidents and professionals who stand in for her. We do not.

Hadassah's immediate past president, Rose Matzkin, was from outside the metropolitan New York area. At considerable personal expense, she leased an apartment in New York City for the period of her presidency. This enabled her to cover her desk. Regrettably, the Hadassah Administration budget cannot support such an expenditure.

11. Your suggestions for task forces are excellent. We will pursue them.

12. We cannot accept Ms. Lieberman's sexist guide to personnel recruitment. Hadassah will continue to employ the best qualified personnel, be they male or female.

Aline Kaplan
Executive Director
Hadassah
New York, NY

Betty Lieberman replies:

Aline Kaplan is paid and living in New York City. Betty Lieberman is a volunteer living in Milwaukee. The goal of my article was not to debate, point by point, her truths

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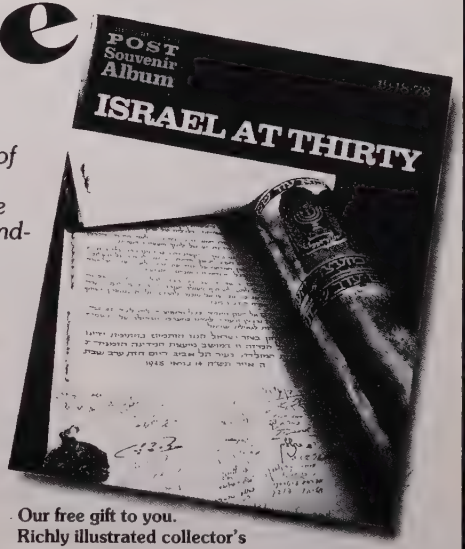

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vs. my truths, but rather to raise the consciousness of women volunteers and their organizations. I wrote about Hadassah because I know it best. I also believe it is the largest and most visible Jewish women's organization and a model for others.

Are we really making the most of our Jewish womanpower—or have we used the male model for our organizations, a model which builds on the myth of female inadequacies and limited capabilities and interests?

It is important for women to listen to each other. We must not dissipate our energies proving each other wrong. We must search together for new ways to enrich women and our organizations.

Dear Editor:

If you can awaken the Jewish women to fact that they are entitled to day's pay for a day's work—you will have accomplished a good deal. I find "fund raisers" especially unaware of their worth—their zeal covers up their need to know what the "job market" calls for. The day of the "Lady Bountiful"do-gooder is over.
Helen M. Klar
(retired teacher, age 75)
New York, NY

To the Editor:

I am a 25-year-old marketing professional, and a very active member of my Junior Hadassah group. I was particularly interested in your issue on volunteerism because I head a task force for the New York Chapter on attracting more young women.

The articles by Paula Hyman and Betty Lieberman left me with mixed feelings. While I consider myself a feminist, I do *not* consider it the task of a Zionist organization, whatever gender its constituents, to "champion the cause of Jewish women." However, as an organization interested in its own continued successful operation, it *is* imperative that we utilize modern management techniques and recognize the need to involve the entire leadership of the organization in the decision-making process. If this results, as Ms. Lieberman suggests it might, in the implementation of affirmative-action policies in Hadassah installations, *kol-ha-kavod!* But, much as I would like to see Jewish women as a whole, and Hadassah women in specific, more active in the realm of feminism and politics, I do *not* view this as the function of our organization.

Hadassah supports many critical projects and installations in Israel, projects without which the State would have suffered. ... Millions of dollars are required to support these projects and it is the primary function of Hadassah to provide these funds. Raising millions of dollars through volunteer efforts is a challenging and difficult task requiring much time and energy. In view of the fact that our membership will have less and less time to devote to the organization, we must learn to focus in on the task at hand. If, in the process, we can also manage to improve the situation for women here and in Israel, wonderful! But we must not lose sight of our *raison d'etre.*
K. Shelly Porges
Chairperson,
Task Force on Young Women
New York Chapter, Hadassah
New York, NY

To the Editors:

As a very actively involved member of Women's American ORT, a major American Jewish organization, I would like to respond to some of the statements and implications made by Ms. Hyman.

She states: *"Jewish women's organizations still do valuable work. But power and prestige in the Jewish community, for the most part, lie elsewhere. ..."* Although this may have been traditionally true, I believe that there is a move in a new direction in understanding the impact that mass-membership organizations can and do have. Within the past year, Women's American ORT and Hadassah have become representative members of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC). ... Additionally, Women's American ORT is represented on the Council of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, in the American Association of Jewish Educators, and on the United States UNESCO Committee of 100. ...I believe that W.A.O. is very much a part of decision making, even on the national level.

I disagree with Ms. Hyman's statement that *"working women are actively discouraged from entering volunteer work because so many meetings are scheduled during working hours."* W.A.O. has accepted the challenge of today's women and is actively involved in adapting organizationally to meet their needs. Not only have many meeting times been changed from afternoon to evening, but new chapters have been chartered which are geared specifically to the needs and interests of the working women.

W.A.O. demands a great deal of its active membership, and the skills which its leadership acquires are sophisticated organizational skills. Today, as I personally look for a "paying" job to help supplement my family's income, I am self-confident, I know that I possess good organizational and managerial skills, and I know that I will be a valuable employee. This is attributable, without question, to my training in W.A.O.

I also take exception to Ms. Hyman's remark about Jewish women's organizations' power being in the *"hands of the paid administrative staff and a thin stratum of upper-echelon volunteer leaders on the national level."* Every single area of W.A.O. in this entire country elects National Board members to represent that area at national meetings. *All* costs to attend these meetings are subvented by the organization, thereby allowing any member to participate at that level of organization.
Margie Siegel
President, Toledo Area Council
Women's American ORT
Toledo, OH

To The Editors:

Referring to Ms. Cantor's statement that women do volunteer work "... to seek the sense of self-worth missing in their lives. ..." Ms. Cantor seems to feel that the error these women are making is in seeking a feeling of self-worth through volunteerism, where they will only continue to be frustrated. If they were allowed to take part in the decision-making process, and were well paid, they would then achieve the self-esteem they are seeking. In fact, they would be equally frustrated, because it is a contradiction in terms to seek *self*-worth from *external* sources.
Laura Rosenbaum
Huntington Beach, CA

Dear LILITH;

I am 94 and active in many social and economic movements, essentially Jewish, in Canada. ... I followed in my European, knowledgeable mother's footsteps.

I am delighted with the valuable insight and important information your magazine offers to help Jewish women and women generally.

I agree with your estimation. I am grateful to women like Henrietta Szold, Sarah Kussey, Jane Addams, Agnes McPhail others.

I find the [progress of the] cause discouraging, but knowledge keeps me strong.
Ida Lewis Siegel
Toronto, Ont.

To the Editors:

As part of my Southern Ca fornia Department of Corrections Prison Ministry, I spend one day week as Rabbi of the Jewish Sis terhood of the California Institut for Women (Frontera), the only women's prison in California. Ou Sisterhood, small but vital, cons of about twelve, half of whom a Jewish and the rest "students." Their custody is anywhere from minimum to maximum. Average age: mid-twenties.

Our women were introduce to your stimulating and thoughtf magazine with the article "Jewis Women in Prison," which provid not only meat for several stimulating discussions but a feeling o mutual-Jewish-women-in-distres

While that article dealt with Jewish inmates on the east coas the experience of the women he is quite comparable: alienation—where does the Jew fit in the White, Black and Chicano powe structure?—the stigma of the Je ish community outside—are ther really Jews in prison?—and insuf cient Jewish resources for help i all areas of need, except for the food goodies on the holidays pa aged by anonymous Sisterhoods none of whom have ever indicat the slightest interest in visiting these forgotten women. (The go Chassidim, always and ever of t poor and distressed, are the blessed exception, delivering the *shalach manot* (Purim gifts) and *shmurah* (specially watched-over *matzah* hand to hand, heart to heart.)

How happy our Sisterhood was to know that at least one Je ish magazine not only acknowledged their existence but was thoughtful enough to write an ob jective and sympathetic article fr the "inside." This letter comes t you as a grateful response for yo article: we want to keep in touch and let you know how we are doing.
Rabbi Mel Silverman, Jewish Chaplain
California Institution for Men
California Institution for Women
California Rehabilitation Center
Chino, CA

Dear Editors:

Aviva Cantor's otherwise excellent article ["TV's 'Holocaus A Sellout to Assimilation," #5] h one central shortcoming. "Holocaust" ultimately does not imply that "Assimilation Saves." Rath the actual message (intended or otherwise) is that assimilation do *not* save us. ...

In portraying the demise of an assimilated family, the authors a really implying that "it can happ

' On the first night of the
. Berta Weiss says, "We're
Germans, nothing can
en to us" (I'm quoting from
ory). Three nights later, as it
she and the rest of her
(except Rudi) are dead.
nilation saves?
. Cantor seems to be con-
s of this tension: "Even the
Weisses, assimilated as they
(Ms. Cantor dismisses their
ilatedness in one subordinate
e) were still more Jewish than
. . ." In what ways were they
e Jewish"? Berta Weiss pro-
s herself a "good German."
ather marches around in his
an Army uniform. And Karl,
perishes in Theresienstadt,
s "Holocaust" by marrying a
e gentile German woman—
Rudi's wife is Jewish, a
st, and quotes Hebrew
ure.
. Cantor correctly documents
of "Holocaust's" flaws. But
Family Weiss'" fate teaches
at a Jew is a Jew, whether in
eshivot of Minsk or the draw-
rooms of Berlin . . . or the
rbs of New York and Los
les. I don't know if this is
the authors actually intended.
d, Ms. Cantor may be correct
cribing to Gerald Green et. al.
pposite motive. But for a year
've wondered if the fictional
y name was selected at
om: is not the lesson of "Holo-
" that even "white" (Weiss)
became black ashes at
hwitz?
i Stephen Listfield
nington, DC

Editors:

eed with Aviva Cantor's
lent polemic on "Holocaust,"
wonder whether she does not
some ambivalence about the
as-Scholar and the Jew-as-
er. On the one hand, she rails
st assimilation, which she
es is an acceptance of
ish" *macho* values; on the
hand, she is not very happy
the soft, gentle non-*macho*
arly Jew.
similation, naturally, is more
lex than this. It is possible, I
to be both tender and tough,
a scholar and a fighter, both a
nitted Jew and an activist.
agree that Gerald Green and
thers responsible for the script
onfused about their own
sh identities and *their* role as
in a powerful medium like
sion. Could Aviva comment a
ore on this tension between
r-scholar, Jew-*Goy*? It is a
ult tight-rope to walk, for an
dual as well as a people.
Nusan Porter
ng Lecturer,
of Sociology
rsity of Lowell
ll, MA

To the editors,
Aviva Cantor's article made a very strong impression. When I saw the TV production I cringed because it was so much like shabby soap opera that it did no justice to the truth or to the memory of the millions we lost. But Ms. Cantor's superb analysis carried the examination a step further and showed that the shortcomings were not just random errors of fact or of artistic skill. They were definite symptoms of the moral, intellectual and Judaic limitations of the authors and also of much of American Jewry.

This excellent article deserves to be read by all who seriously viewed this TV production to provide much needed balance, instruction and insight. May I respectfully suggest that you offer this article to other journals in Jewish affairs for re-publication. It is also valuable for serious discussion groups.

I plan to circulate the article among the rabbis of the three synagogues in my community. Thanks to Ms. Cantor and the dedicated editors and staff of LILITH for this article and for a courageous and valuable magazine much needed in the Jewish community.
Bertram Cohen
Poughkeepsie, NY

Dear Editor:

Many thanks for the stirring article, "Our Soviet Sisters" by Susan C. Dessel (Kol Ishah, #5). Protests are beginning to work. As of this writing, two of the women refuseniks listed, Irene Gildengorn and Larissa Vilenskaya, have received official promises of exit visas.
Glenn Richter
National Coordinator
Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry
New York, NY

Dear LILITH:

Your voice must, indeed, be raised if we want to restore justice to the basic value of Judaism.

Perhaps you would be more effective through less bitterness, suspicion and individualism.

The wish for fruitfulness, for instance, is definitely more than a mere plot of male leaders against Jewish feminism [see "The Population Panic" by Shirley Frank, #4].

Instead of merely fighting for individual fulfillment, Jewish women would do good to outline a modern Jewish family and society ethos integrating equality and notions of rights with the traditional ethos of excellence and duties.
Prof. Zev W. Falk
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear LILITH:

In your article on ERA [Kol Ishah, #5], you mentioned that 15 states had not yet ratified.

Enemies of ERA keep telling ridiculous stories to gullible members of our society. Women should know that if they have equality they don't have to go to war or not be supported by their husbands when they walk out or be required to go to work full time.

The Amendment reads: *Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.*

Isn't it pitiful that people should fear this?

Also . . . the needlework piece of mine which you photographed for #5's Letters page was incorrectly titled. It was to have been called "The Liberated Woman's Canvas" and is a satire on being liberated, what with all the contraceptives and the female's constant and daily concern with her sexuality. Each day she worries if she is pregnant or if she is not pregnant. The inclusion of the mirror is to help the viewer to figure out how they fit into the picture.
Ita Aber
Yonkers, NY

Dear Editors,

I am honored with the page "LILITH's Choice" [LILITH, #5] in recognition of the work I am doing, and encouraged in my adventure with Judaic papercuts. I would like to correct and expand on some of the information given.

Historically, it was the *men* who were involved in papercuts. Cheder-boys, *Melamdim, belfers*, scribes and old men worked intricate or simpler patters enhanced with quotations and water-colors. Most prominent were the *"mizrachs"* and *"shivite"* to mark the Eastern wall, often given as gifts.

The *"Kimpet-Briv"* were made by cheder-boys, who would come into the homes of women about to give birth, say prayers for them and the children to come, put up the *"Kimpet-Briv"* on the walls and leave.

"Ushpizin" are Succah deocrations with a *special text* from Genesis of what Abraham said to the angels (disguised as poor people) inviting them to eat and drink; thus it invites all who are hungry to join in the Succah feast.

I have been told by women who are grandmothers today that they recall making *"reyzelech"* with embroidery scissors together with their grandmothers to decorate the windows in the Polish shtetls for Shavuot.

Jewish papercuts have a full and widely-travelled history, rich in ethnic lore. From the specimens that survive we see it permitted an outlet for visual expression that reflected the life of the Jewish people.
Tzirl Waletzky
Bronx, NY

"Lilith Not Universal"

I found *Lilith* to be quite provincial and narrow in its appeal. There seemed to be none of the universalism available from some, if not many, religiously oriented publications. More fundamentally, I have come to the conclusion that attempts by women to reform what are basically patriachal religious patterns are intellectually dishonest, morally shallow, and ultimately self-defeating. I strongly believe that the women's movement is the most profoundly good revolutionary action in our century and that it must not find itself comfortable within male institutions if it is to change the very relationship between men and women that is now so destructive. Women must once and for all realize that the struggle for women's rights comes *first*, or else we will once again barter away our liberty as we have for thousands of years. I am afraid that the women who edit and write for *Lilith* are Jewish first and women second. That loses ground for all reasons.
(name withheld)

This letter illustrates well the difficulties many Jewish women are facing in dealing with their Jewish identity as feminists. We have all *been trying to come to terms with what it means to be Jewish and a woman. LILITH plans in an upcoming issue a forum on Jewish women's identity which will focus on what it means to us to be Jewish—whether that meaning is theological, political, religious, cultural, familial, spiritual, social. Why are we Jewish? How are feminism and Judaism "reconciled"? If you have been thinking about these issues, please share your thoughts with LILITH's readers.*

All letters to the Editor become the property of LILITH and cannot be acknowledged or returned; if printed, they may be edited because of space limitations. Requests for anonymity will of course be honored.

Kol Ishah

Cont'd. from Page 8

News from Israel

Battered Wives and the Law

Some 60,000 cases of women beaten by their husbands were reported in Israel in 1978, according to WIZO, the Women's International Zionist Organization, which offers legal aid to women in Israel.

In 1977, 11 women died of such beatings. Hundreds more were seriously injured or hospitalized.

A report filed by Marion Kwartler for the Jewish Student Press Service states that the Israeli police have generally adopted the attitude that "family violence is not a matter of 'police concern' and that, when possible, they should avoid such cases. ... Few battered women file complaints because they are not offered protection from their husbands during the filing process."

According to Kwartler, the problem is complicated by the rabbinical courts:

"Since 1951 the rabbinate has been given full jurisdiction in family law (e.g., divorce)—and because of a civil law which states that any legal complaint lodged by one spouse against another can be deferred to the rabbinical courts, the rabbinate also deals with assault and battery cases brought against husbands.

"The problem is complicated by the fact that the rabbinical court has virtually no power to punish. While a civil court of law can hand down a sentence of up to 15 years for a case of personal assault, the rabbinical court can only order a man out of the house. Usually the rabbis will try to make *'shalom bayit'*—peace in the house—and get the feuding couple to reconcile, leaving the woman with absolutely no recourse.

"If a woman were to leave an untenable household situation without the permission of the rabbinical court, she could be termed a rebellious wife and be deprived of all the rights granted to her in the marriage contract (financial support, custody of children and even a divorce).

"The burden of proof in a rabbinical court case of this nature rests with the woman. This proof generally consists of a police file—if one exists—and a medical certificate from an emergency room or a private doctor. (Rabbinical courts do not, however, acknowledge the testimony of women—victims, neighbors, or social workers.)

"But, as with the police file, most women are unaware of the importance of a medical certificate, which is not given out automatically. A social worker in Jerusalem's Shaare Tsedek hospital emergency room pointed out that doctors rarely bother to advise women to request a certificate.

"As a result of the complicated legal procedures, last year there were only two men jailed on charges of beating their wives."

In Israel, as in other countries surveyed by various women's groups, wife-beating knows no class boundaries. Kwartler reports that *Lo* ("No"), an organization formed to combat family violence, was told by an Israeli police chief that "there are battered wives in affluent Herzliya Pituach as well as in the slums."

Women for Women: Haifa's Shelter for Battered Wives

"All their lives, people have been telling these women what to do. What we want to do is give them time to think. Here, they're not in danger of their lives." These words express the main goal of Haifa's shelter for battered women. About 200 women have lived there in the shelter since it was founded a year ago. Some have stayed a few days, others weeks, while twice that number have passed through, seeking counselling about their husbands or about birth control or pregnancy. Fifty to 60% return to their husbands.

Three or four times during the year, men have tried to break into the shelter, an apartment with an unlisted address, to get their wives. "The women are great," an American-born volunteer counsellor said. "They're ready for the man with pots and pans. When they're alone, they never stand up to their husbands. When they're together, it's different. Also, when men come by we usually call the police right away, and they've been very helpful."

The staff of the shelter consists of volunteer counsellors, a few part-time paid administrators, and one professional full-time social worker.

All the shelter administrators hold other jobs, as there is not enough money to pay them full salaries. Limitations on money and staff have meant that the shelter has had to refuse many of the calls for help that it receives. It has had to turn away the teenage girls who sought refuge there.

Former Knesset member Marcia Freedman, the original driving force behind the shelter, said, "We started with nothing—no money, no place." Gradually contributions came in, and finally, IL500,000 (about $20,800) was obtained from the government. Each woman who stays there contributes a small amount to help keep up the shelter. Most of the women pay this money out of welfare checks.

For some women, their welfare checks may be the first money of their own that they've had.

Children as well as mothers seem to benefit by leaving their difficult home situations and coming to the shelter. "Most of the children come looking really scared," said a volunteer. "Within a few days, it's beautiful to see, they're just like regular children."

The great majority of battered women who have lived at the shelter are working class, and either Sephardic or have husbands of this background. Israeli Arab women do not come to the shelter for help, and there are no Arab women on the staff. Middle class Jewish women seem to feel that it would be degrading to stay at the shelter, volunteers said, and they may have the money to find other help. However, many of them do come for advice.

"One woman was beaten both by her husband, a lawyer, and her son, a 28-year-old medical student," said a shelter worker. "Most of the middle-class women that come to us say, at some point in the conversation, 'To think I should have come to this!' or 'If my husband were to see me now!' They feel so ashamed to be turning to us for help. I try to tell them, 'Look, it's he that ought to be ashamed!' "

Hannah Davis

The Haifa group made a dramatic move when they had to leave their original apartment because of an astronomical leap in rent. After looking around for something within their means, they finally reached a point where their lease was about to expire and they still had nowhere to go.

They took over a house owned by Na'amat (Pioneer Women's Organization) and declared they wouldn't leave until they had some place of their own. Na'amat called in the police and demanded that the women be thrown out. The police did not use force, and an agreement was reached to let the women spend the night there. The Ministry of Social Welfare is now helping them and they do have a new place.

Tamar Kaufman

FRIENDS' TALK

A new, bilingual (Hebrew/Eng magazine, *Friends' Talk (Sichat Rayot),* made its first appearanc last winter. The magazine has a 50-page format, with Hebrew an English sections each taking up one-half the magazine.

In addition to providing listing services for women in Israel (including legal advisory bureaus the premiere issue featured the children's story "Electra the Maccabee" by Elizabeth Levy an Aviva Cantor which originally appeared in LILITH No. 2, a repo on the Prime Minister's Commis on the Status of Women in Israe and a how-to article on installing windows.

Friends' Talk is edited by Tam Kaufman, whose reporting appe in these pages. The publication its first issue was underwritten b feminist groups and interested individuals in Israel. The price is IL 15 (about 65 ¢). To cover the cost of the issue plus having it mailed to North America, send $2.50 to:

Friends' Talk
P.O.B. 9258
Jerusalem

Women's Bookstore Opens in Haifa

"Only when we women learn believe in our own strength will succeed in influencing society. I hope *Woman's Voice* will help women learn to believe in themselves." Thus 90-year-old Rache Kagan, who served in Israel's fir Knesset at the head of a women list, congratulated the organizer Israel's first women's bookstore its January opening in Haifa.

Aside from the store, which t up one of the apartment's four rooms, there is a library/reading room set up as a cafe; a study room; meeting room; and a chil dren's corner with games, puzzl and children's books.

r. Amalia Bergman, a physicist, Marcia Freedman, former mber of Knesset, decided to n *Woman's Voice* after an nded visit to various women's ters in the United States. ere are today many women in el who are deeply concerned ut the status of women," they , "although most of them still 'I'm not a feminist, but ....' want to provide a place where se women can meet, exchange rmation, and be introduced to heterogeneity of feminist cul- that is spreading throughout world. And for feminists visiting el, we'll be a home away from ne."

A cursory glance over the book- lves revealed a predominance of glish, but there is a growing num- of feminist books in Hebrew. A Aviv company called "The Sec- l Sex" has already published a rew translation of Barbara Sea- n's *Free and Female* (available at *man's Voice*) and will soon be ting out Hebrew versions of *le Chauvinism* and *Our Bodies, rselves.*

Original Hebrew works for sale at bookstore include Shulamit ni's *Women as Human Beings,* chia Bat-Oren's *Women's eration, Whither?* and Sarah ariyahu's *History of the Women's vement in the Land of Israel,* ich is the history of the pre-state vement for women's suffrage. *ends' Talk* the new dual- guage women's magazine, is o on sale there.

Woman's Voice will also offer sses in such diversified subjects "An Approach to Legal and ministrative Problems," "I, A oman: Consciousness Raising," Vomen in Literature," self ense, "Women in Zionism," ildren's Literature," "Do It rself," "Feminist Activity: eory and Practice" and "Prepara- n for Natural Childbirth: the naze Method." This last will be ded into two classes: one for ples and the other for single men.

mar Kaufman

adassah: hoosing werlessness

Vhat had our mothers been ng then that they had no alth to leave us?"
Virginia Woolf: A Room of e's Own

Surely Virginia Woolf's protest ut our mothers' poverty does apply to Hadassah. The famous dassah Hospital in Ein Karem, usalem (totally dependent on the anization), has cost $86 million uild—and the building continues. Hadassah Medical Organization eneral (not including the build- ing fund) has received $225 million from its generous parent over the years. And in addition the "Hadassah ladies" have managed to raise $27,756,000 for their educational services in Israel, $9 million for youth activities, $83,915,000 for Youth Aliyah and $31 million for the Jewish National Fund.

It is clear from the above figures that our mothers—and our sisters and aunts and grandmothers—now have wealth, both in its limited sense and in a wider sense: power. The women of Hadassah have built an organization worthy of anyone's respect—efficient, capable, in a word, powerful. With 360,000 members it is the largest women's organization in the United States and one of the most influential Zionist organizations in the world. To what extent are the women of Hadassah using their power on behalf of Jewish women?

To find the answer, I attended Hadassah's 64th National Convention held in Israel last fall with 3,000 delegates and guests attending. The highlight of the convention, from my point of view, was an Oneg Shabbat program during which the topic of women's rights in Israel was to be discussed. This was the only place on the program where women's rights, in Israel or America, were to be touched upon.

The speaker at the Oneg Shabbat which I attended was Ora Ahimeyer, coordinator of the Prime Minister's Commission on the Status of Women in Israel, which recently published its findings after investigating Israeli society for two years.

Ahimeyer started by describing briefly the myth of sexual equality with which Israeli women and men have been raised. Then she told how the Yom Kippur War had shattered this myth for many women.

"Nobody trained us—nobody trusted us—in peace, so we were useles in war," Ahimeyer told the audience. "This widespread frustration brought about the Commission on the Status of Women in Israel.

"The press called it 'the shattering truth about Israeli women', but *we* didn't discover anything earth-shattering. The most devastating thing about the entire report was the accumulation of all the facts—that, for example, on the average, women earn 60% the salaries of men in the same jobs—despite the existence of a ten-year-old Equal Pay Law."

Although conservative by American standards (witness the extensive use of their husbands' names in place of their own) the women of Hadassah—and their husbands—are aware, at least in principle, of many of these issues. The question remained: how does their organization reflect this awareness?

Answer: The National Convention had very little to say on the subject of women's rights. Considering the size of the organization, its impressive accomplishments in the fields of medicine and education and, above all, the fact that it is a *women's* organization, this was curious. Perhaps there was no need to mention women's rights because it was such a constant part of their day-to-day work?

Unfortunately, this hypothesis did not survive the facts. During a plenary session in which the Hadassah Medical Organization presented its reports, I counted one female and 15 male heads of medical services on the dais, and one woman administrator, the director of the School of Nursing, as opposed to 18 male administrators.

Statistics from the hospital bore out this impression. Only 9% of the doctors at Hadassah are women, and 3% of the nurses are men. The women doctors are mostly to be found in such traditionally female departments as pediatrics, psychiatry, social medicine and anesthesiology, where they comprise 20% of the doctors. Seven or eight departments—out of 78—are headed by women.

Another project is the Hadassah Vocational Guidance Institute. Hadassah supplies only part of their budget, the rest coming from individual applicants and institutions which use its services.

The Institute sells pamphlets to school guidance counsellors and others which describe, in Hebrew, various jobs and careers. The nature of Hebrew grammar being what it is, one must choose one gender or the other to describe the person practicing a trade or profession (doctor, welder, etc.) According to the rules of Hebrew grammar, the masculine gender is the universal one; a single male in an otherwise female group makes the entire group masculine.

Logically, then, the masculine gender should be used to describe all jobs, as there may be one man out there making his living at any of them. And, in fact, the pamphlet describing the lawyer's profession is written exclusively in the masculine gender. Even the accompanying photographs depict only men. The same is true of "mechanical engineers," "television writer" and "translator," although this last also contains a photograph of a woman translator.

The pamphlets on "secretary," "switchboard operator," and "stenographer," however, are all written in the feminine gender and illustrated with pictures of females.

Dinah Epstein, principal of the coeducational Hadassah Seligsberg-Brandeis Comprehensive High School, is aware of these problems. The school, which combines vocational and academic training, offers all its courses of study to all its students, she said.

Epstein added that, as a result of the Yom Kippur War they realized that "women had to be able to *replace* men" ... which is not quite the same thing as broadening opportunities for women.

Despite this stated goal of the school's administrators, the majority of girls and boys continue to stick to the traditional courses of study. Girls, however, are now entering electronics—the present class has about 20 boys and one girl—and "many" girls are studying computers. No boys are studying cooking or fashion "which is strange," Epstein observed, "since the best chefs and fashion designers are men. ..."

At all the meetings on Hadassah projects I asked about the input from the American parent organization and what say it might have regarding their policies. The replies were that Hadassah leaves the local administrators to set all policies with no interference whatsoever.

Indeed, during the convention I was informed over and over again that "We don't come to *another country* and tell them what to do."

But is Israel "another country" to American Jews, no different from France or Japan? Hadassah has been pouring its collective strength and ability into Israel not because it is "another country," but because it is Israel. How then can they be so indifferent to the policies of their own institutions and the effect these policies have on the country?

Israel is very small. Revolutionary policies in one network of services—particularly one as influential and respected as the Hadassah network—would of necessity have repercussions throughout the country. By doing nothing to influence sexist policies in its own institutions, Hadassah is, indeed, doing something to continue them.

Tamar Kaufman

Szold Museum

A mini-museum memorializing Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah, organizer of Youth Aliyah, and a leader of the Yishuv (Jewish community in pre-state Israel), was dedicated on March 18, 1979, at the Hadassah Hebrew University Hospital on Mt. Scopus.

Szold's life-work is depicted on two levels of a circular room in the hospital's Ross Information Center. The lower level is furnished simply, as was Szold's study while the upstairs is arranged as a gallery displaying mementos from the various activities and facets of her life. The inscription on the walls of the room states Szold's philosophy: "There is no ending that is not a beginning."

Rape Crisis Center Closes

The Feminist Center in Tel Aviv, which included a Rape Crisis Center providing a telephone hotline for rape victims (see Kol Ishah, LILITH

No. 5), as well as counseling, discussion groups and help in prosecuting rapists, was forced to close its doors when the landlord attempted to raise the monthly rent from IL 2,000 (about $83) to IL 5,000 (about $208).

Joanne Yaron, Tel Aviv feminist activist, said the group is now "looking for a new place to be used as a Center for the Movement."

American Women Seek Ties

A group of North American Jewish women are discussing the formation of an ad-hoc committee to facilitate liaison between Israeli and American feminists.

The women, many of whom are active in the major American Jewish women's organizations, have had two organizational meetings as of this writing. They are considering support of various aspects of the women's movement in Israel, possibly those projects for which there is no other funding. At the very least, the committee would like to disseminate to American women information about Israeli feminist projects and their addresses to enable visitors to Israel to meet directly with activists.

For further information about this group, contact:

Virginia L. Snitow
88 Walworth Ave.
Scarsdale NY 10583

הצילו את ההפלה החוקית!

"Save legal abortion" is the call of the leaflet distributed by the Israeli Feminist Movement in Jerusalem. The legalized abortion law is under attack by the Agudat Israel (religious) Party which seeks to eliminate "social" (i.e., economic) reasons as valid qualifications for legal abortions. Obviously, it is the poorer women who would be most hurt by such a change in the law. Agudat Israel has threatened to leave the government of Menachem Begin if their demanded changes are not met.

Guide to Israeli Women's Groups and Projects

The League for Women's Rights in the Courts
P.O.B. 52
Kfar Yona, Israel
phone: 053-38108

WIZO Legal Advisory Bureaus for Women
These exist in 22 cities and towns in Israel. For local addresses and hours, contact:
WIZO
1 Rehov Mapu
Jerusalem
phone: 02-223641/227709

S.H.I.L.O. Pregnancy Advisory Service
(free, independent counseling and referral agency)
10 Rehov Bezalel
Jerusalem

Woman's Voice (bookstore)
99 Sderot Hanassi
Haifa

Jerusalem Branch of Israel Feminist Movement
P.O.B. 7363
Jerusalem

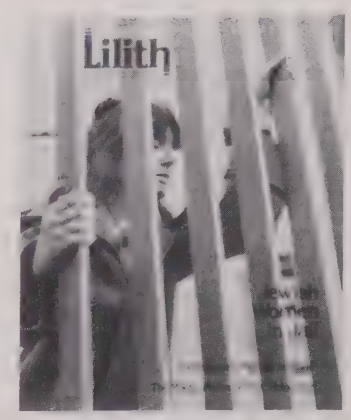
The Lesbian Feminist Organization
(Irgun Aleph)
P.O.B. 32379
Tel Aviv

LO—Fighting Violence Against Women
58 Rehov Sokolov
Herzliya
phone: 03-983056

The Second Sex Publishing Co.
(brings out Hebrew translations of feminist literature)
55 Rehov Shenkin
Givatayim

Women for Women
(Shelter for Battered Women)
P.O.B. 4667
Haifa

Follow-Up on News



Jailed Women

Since the publication of Lilith's feature story on Jewish women prisoners at New York State's Bedford Hills Correctional Facility [*"Jewish Women in Jail," Lilith #5*], there have been events of note in the lives of some of the women we talked with.

Karen Ramos, 36, sentenced to 15-years-to-life, received clemency from Governor Hugh Carey, and was released in February. She has moved into her own apartment in New York City. When she first came home from jail and lived with her parents, her mother couldn't understand why she wanted to keep her bedroom door shut. "Just to read the newspaper, or take a nap, and know that no one is watching you is *wonderful*," said Ramos.

While appreciative of the support the LILITH article gave her case, Ramos expressed dismay in a recent interview that the piece had called attention to conflicts between the black women at Bedford (the majority of the prison population) and the white, Jewish women. "My best friends at Bedford were two of the black women who were active with me in CALD (the Committee Against Life for Drugs)," she said.

Ramos is now working for the two lawyers who were instrumental in freeing her and who had been in touch with her throughout her three years at Bedford. "They're my heroes, of course," said Ramos. She and the attorneys are involved with helping other prisoners sentenced on drug charges.

Ramos reported that recent changes in the New York State drug laws will lead to some prisoners' being resentenced and given reduced terms. The new laws, however, do not affect the 158 prisoners serving life terms for drugs; their only recourse is clemency from the Governor. To join the public pressure for clemency, write to:
Governor Hugh L. Carey
Governor's Mansion
Albany, NY 12224

Madeline Pinetta, 36, who w serving a 25-years-to-life term on drug charges, received clemency few months after Ramos and wa released at the end of May.

Harriet Schwartz, referred to as "Marge" in LILITH's feature, circulating a petition in the hope of receiving clemency. She is in sixth year of a 15-years-to-life ter For copies of the petition and/or learn more about the case, write her c/o LILITH and we will forwa the letter.

Two days before Passover was celebrated by Jews everywhere else, the Jewish women at Bedfo held their seder. Each prisoner w allowed outside guests, in additio to their chaplain, Rabbi Rone, an volunteers from Mt. Kisco's Con Bet Torah who visit the women regularly, and their spouses. Rabb Rone also invited LILITH editors Aviva Cantor and Susan Weidma Schneider to the seder.

About 50 people attended, in- cluding a babe-in-arms, the gran child of one of the prisoners. The atmosphere was lively and festive and the meal, catered and served by the volunteers, traditional.

The hagadah, however, was no the standard version but a femini ceremony written by Cantor, and conducted by Rabbi Rone. He sa

"It's very difficult to speak abo freedom in a prison setting, but t use of the feminist hagadah mad this Passover especially meaningf for the women."

LILITH's notice requesting con tributions for subscriptions to jail women has brought donations fr Isabel Auerbach, Batya Bauman, Michael Berkowitz Jeanne E. Brodsky, Beryl Chassin Karen Cook, Allan Kaplan, Janet Kelman, Celia Klein, Joan Leven- thal, Louise E. Rothstein, Jean Stern, Janice Stiers, Gloria Ulme Gail Whitty and Jill Yolen. Much thanks to all of the above.

Women's Passover seder in priso

Dene Ross

olocaust"'s al Lesson

recently released American ish Committee study revealed more viewers than non-viewers ne television mini-series "Holo- st" "reacted negatively to what seen as Jewish passivity."

he study, "Americans Confront Holocaust," by A.J.C. staff arch analyst Geraldine Rosen- l, was based on telephone inter- vs conducted in early May, 1978 822 respondents from across nation. Of these, 411 had seen r part of *Holocaust,* while 411 not.

Vhile noting that the sample of -viewers included more people o are "uncaring or uneasy about vs and their concerns" than the ple of viewers, Rosenfield ertheless concluded:

Contrary to what might have n expected, viewers were some- at more inclined than non- vers (25 percent as against 17 cent) to put the blame for what pened primarily on the Jews. reover, of those viewers who ted the Jews, 47 percent said y did not fight hard enough, ereas only 22 percent of the non- vers took this position."

Among viewers aged 18 to 29, ne 30 percent held Jews as stly or partly at fault for their n persecution.

What accounts for the distressing that one *out of every four* vers—*after* watching some or all *Holocaust*—concluded that Jews e mostly or partly at fault for r destruction? In her summary, senfield suggested:

There are indications that, pite the scenes dealing with the istance, *[Holocaust]* made the ims of Nazism seem totally esisting and without spirit. This y explain why viewers were far re likely than non-viewers to lay ne of the blame on the victims not fighting back."

eaders of LILITH will recall that va Cantor focused on this gerous distortion in her review ay on "Holocaust" in issue #5. must be emphasized that the rwhelming majority of viewers percent) thought that *Holocaust* e an accurate picture of how the is treated Jews. Thus, many vers may well have accepted as e certain historical inaccuracies misleading stereotypes sented in the mini-series— uding the image of Jews as ak, passive, unresisting victims. Unfortunately, none of the sur- questions focused on the per- ive sexism of *Holocaust.* In ald Green's male version of ory, the "domineering" Jewish ther, Berta Weiss, refuses to w her family to leave Germany— most of them are killed. The mbitious" German wife, Marta f, coaxes her apolitical husband joining the Nazis—and he becomes an architect of the Final Solution.

One can only wonder how many viewers—after four nights of such messages—might have held *women* (both Jewish and non-Jewish) to be "mostly or partly at fault" for the mistakes, misdeeds, and genocidal crimes committed by men.

Bob Lamm

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Women in the Holocaust

LILITH is planning a special issue on Women in the Holocaust and the Resistance.

We welcome manuscripts (including translations), in these categories: survivor testimony, oral history, autobiographical and experiential accounts, memoirs and diaries—including those by survivors' children; poetry, short fiction, excerpts from novels and dramas; biographical accounts, historical and sociological articles on women before, during and after the Holocaust, and on American Jewish women's responses during the catastrophe; critiques of adult and juvenile books, films and theatre, media; analyses and opinion pieces.

All submissions should be double-spaced, and will be acknowledged if you send a SAS postcard. All material will be held until issue is published, and will be returned if SASE supplied. All manuscripts become the property of LILITH Publications Inc.

Send material to:

LILITH
Suite 1328H
250 West 57 Street
New York, NY 10019

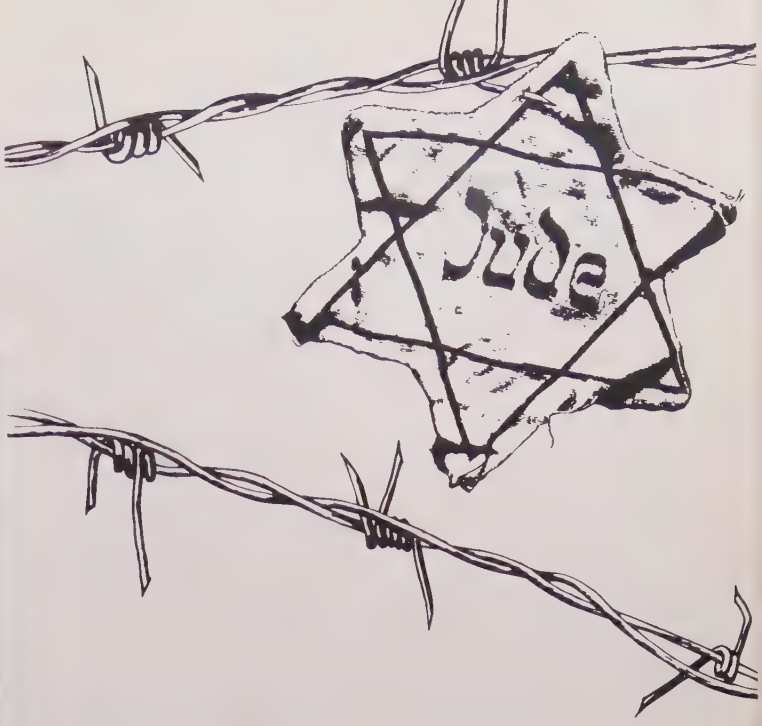
Seminar in Miami

When the University of Miami first offered Literature of the Holocaust as an undergraduate English course in the Fall of 1973, Professor Helen Fagin had to define the Holocaust for some students.

She doesn't have to do that anymore. Nevertheless, she said, "The entire community has been lethargic about the Holocaust." To overcome the apathy and lack of knowledge, Fagin organized an intensive three-day "Conference on the Moral Significance of the Holocaust" last fall for 675 local professionals, lay persons, academics, clergy and students.

A native of Radomsko, a town 200 miles south of Warsaw, Fagin escaped the lines for Treblinka, where her parents perished. Still in her teens, she was incarcerated in the Warsaw Ghetto and later, in a labor camp. Again she escaped and lived underground. After the war, she emigrated to New York with her two sisters.

Norma Orovitz



Bella Out, Landa Stays

When former Rep. Bella Abzug was fired by President Carter from her job of Co-Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee for Women, 25 of that Committee's 40 members resigned in solidarity with her.

"We regret the necessity to resign but we see no alternative," their joint statement read, in part. "We believe that all women and men of like mind will refuse to participate in an advisory committee in which disagreement with the President and legitimate criticism are not acceptable."

One of the Committee members who chose not to resign was Esther R. Landa, President of the National Council of Jewish Women. In the March/April, 1979 issue of the *NCJW Journal*, Landa justified her stand as follows:

"A recent incident .... has caused turmoil among those groups fighting for women's rights. The controversy centered on the National Advisory Committee for Women, on which I serve. The question remains in my mind, whether this action and its implications are enough to justify scuttling the one official instrument which the President created to hear the views of women.

"Until it becomes evident that the committee cannot function effectively at all I have opted to remain on the committee and try to work from within ...."

Reena Sigman Friedman

© Gail Rubin

Honoring Gail Rubin

A new library-lecture hall was dedicated at Kibbutz Ma'agen Micha'el's nature field school in honor of Gail Rubin, the wildlife photographer murdered by terrorists March 11, 1978 near the kibbutz (See LILITH 5). She had been photographing the many birds who come in from the sea to the kibbutz fish ponds. The new lecture hall replaces the small bomb shelter previously used by nature students. A book of Gail Rubin's photographs is due to be published in September by Abbeyville Press.

Resources for Jewish Women

Study

DRISHA, a new institute for Jewish studies designed "to meet the intellectual needs of the committed Jewish woman of today," has opened on Manhattan's West Side. The institute's program, which features the study and analysis of traditional Jewish texts, such as the Bible, Mishnah, Talmud and Codes of Jewish Law, is open to both full-time and part-time students. Tuition for full-time students is $750.00 per term; part-time tuition will be pro-rated. Scholarships are available for all needy applicants. For applications and information:

Rabbi David Silver
Drisha
P.O. Box 858, Ansonia Station
New York, New York 10023

Music

The English translation of Hannah Senesh's famous poem, "Blessed Is The Match," has been set to music by Joanne Forman, a musician working with the Performing Arts Press of Taos, New Mexico.

Hannah Senesh was one of the great Jewish heroines of the twentieth century. Born in Hungary in 1921, she left her childhood home for Palestine when she was still in her teens. During the dark days of the Holocaust, she volunteered for the dangerous task of re-entering Nazi-occupied Europe in order to smuggle Jews out to Palestine. On March 13, 1944 she parachuted into Yugoslavia and, upon crossing the border to Hungary, was captured by the Nazis, subjected to a mock trial, and ultimately executed.

From the age of thirteen, Senesh kept a journal and wrote poetry, a practice which she continued even in her death cell. "Blessed Is The Match" was written in Sardice, Yugoslavia on May 2, 1944.

Forman's rendition of the lovely poem is available, for $1.50 a copy, from:

Performing Arts Press
P.O. Box 3181
Taos, New Mexico 87571

Film

Ilana Bar-Din's forthcoming autobiographical documentary, entitled *Sisters: A Jewish Family in Transition,* examines the manner in which Judaism and feminism, traditional culture and changing roles, are integrated into the lives of four young women.

Ms. Bar-Din focuses upon her own family relationships, particularly the dilemmas and conflicts of sisters as they emerge as individuals within contemporary American society.

Although the 16mm, 30-minute color film is still in production, local and national public broadcasting networks have expressed interest in airing it. *Sisters* will soon be available to community, university, and religious groups.

Ilana Bar-Din
c/o Film Arts Foundation
490 Second St.
San Francisco CA 94107

Number Our Days is a film produced and directed by Lynne Littman and based on the anthropological fieldwork of Barbara Myerhoff, whose book of the same name was published by Dutton in November 1978. A portrait of elderly East European Jewish immigrants in Venice, California, the film won the Academy Award for the best documentary short subject. For distribution, contact:

Hackford / Littman
6620 Cahuenga Terrace
Los Angeles CA 90068
(213) 467-6802

Anna Brown is a new film by Lisa Kaplan—a portrait of the filmmaker's 81-year-old grandmother, including reminiscences about her arrival in the United States in 1913. For distribution, contact:

Lisa Kaplan
(212) 741-0494
(516) 764-9828

Marking the hundredth anniversary of the famous "Anna O" insanity case described by Sigmund Freud, Dina Cukier and Ann Jackowitz are producing a film based on Lucy Freeman's book *The Story of Anna O.* Pappenheim struggled to overcome a morphine addiction and earned an international reputation defending the rights of Jewish prostitutes.

Dina Cukier or Ann Jackowitz
Jina Productions
1170 Broadway
New York NY
(212) 679-1374

In Her Hands: Women and Ritual is a videotape on sex roles and menstrual rituals among Syrian Jewish women, by Faye Ginsburg, Lily Kharrazi, Diane Winston. Contact:

Jewish Media Service
15 East 26th Street
New York, NY 10010

A forthcoming film by Frans Weisz, a Dutch filmmaker, tells the colorful and tragic story of Charlotte Salomon, a young Jewish artist who died in Auschwitz. Salomon's works depict the rise of Nazism and the horrors of the Holocaust in both her native Germany and later in France. Because her paintings are autobiographical in

Pomegranates: stylized in this wo
in silk and metal thread embroide

nature, and have a moving emotional quality, Charlotte Salomon has come to be known as "the Anne Frank of Painting."

For further information about either Salomon or the film, contac

Frans Weisz
Jacob Obrechtstraat 43
Amsterdam, Nederlands
OR
Joods Historisch Museum
Waaggebouw
Nieumarkt
Amsterdam, Nederlands

Prayer

Several traditionally oriented women's davening (prayer) group in New York do not designate themselves "minyans" (the traditional prayer quorum of ten men), and omit sections of the service that cannot be recited without suc a quorum.

Kol Nashim, formerly known as the West Side Women's Shabbat Davening Group, holds a service twice a month. The exclusively female group is a political force in the community and maintains a di logue with Orthodox rabbis. The group conducts training sessions i Torah reading, as well as special observances on Rosh Chodesh (th holiday on the first day of the new Jewish month) and holidays.

Beverly Worthman
808 West End Avenue 307
New York, New York 10025
866-4949

The Washington Heights Women's Davening Group holds a complete traditional service once a month. The group encourages observant women to participate, although it is open to all. Those interested should call:

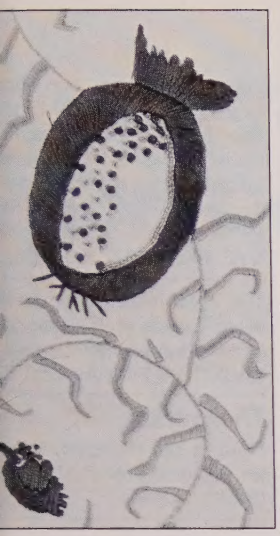
Frieda Birnbaum
(212) 795-8867

Riverdale Women's Tefillah also

Tsena Rena

"Go and see" or "seek enlightenment" is the title of the Yiddish-language Torah for women containing the portion of the week and folk tales.

Tsena Rena was the first resource that enabled women to educate themselves.



Embroidery: Ita Aber; Photos: Eve Kessler

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cts a monthly service. The
is partially sponsored by an
lox synagogue and is subject
rulings of Rabbi Avraham
For more information, call:

n Schacter
49-8130

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r and author of feminist chil-
books, appears in a one-
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w."
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ivers, a novel by Anzia
ska, portrays a young immi-
Jewish woman's struggle for
ndence from her tyrannical
who remains rooted in tradi-
European values.
performance is approximate-
hour in length, and is
riate for high school,
, women's and synagogue
. Fee is $100 per perform-
n addition to travel expenses.

t Herman
olusa Ave.
ley CA 94707

ew catalogue announces the
ility of the following records
oes of interest to Jewish
n: Denise Levertov, Muriel
ser and Gertrude Stein, each
g her own poetry; Dame
Anderson reading the Books
ith and Ruth; Julie Harris
g from *The Diary of Anne*
Lillian Hellman reading from
ntimento; Bella Abzug read-
Speech to the National
Club; other Great American
n's Speeches, including one
estine Rose; and Ruth Rubin
g Jewish folk songs. The
gue is available free from:
e Slohm Association, Inc.
The Women's Audio Exchange Department
49 West Main St.
Cambridge NY 12816

In Print

A new book, exploring the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* (a major Jewish feminist organization founded in Germany in the early twentieth century) and the life of its founder, Bertha Pappenheim, has recently been published by the Greenwood Press.

Written by Marion A. Kaplan, the book, entitled *The Jewish Feminist Movement in Germany: The Campaigns of the Jüdischer Frauenbund, 1904-1938,* discusses Pappenheim's personal aspirations as well as the goals of the movement that she founded, which grew to include over 50,000 women.

Kaplan describes the Frauenbund's feminist ideology, as well as its three most effective campaigns: the struggle against white slavery; the demand for women's rights within the corporate Jewish community; and the campaign to provide increased job opportunities for women.

In 1893, Rosa Sonnenschein, a prominent American Jewish woman, read a paper before the Press Congress at the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, announcing that the time had come to establish a literary journal for women that would "connect with the cord of mutual interest the sisters dwelling throughout the length and breadth of the country."

The story of Sonnenschein's publication, *The American Jewess,* is told by Jack Nusan Porter in a recent article in *American Jewish History* (September 1978). As the first independent Jewish women's journal in the United States, *The American Jewess* is LILITH's illustrious, though short-lived, predecessor.

Considered by people of the time to be radical and even militant in its tone, *The American Jewess* addressed issues of concern to Jewish women, such as the unionization of women workers, protective labor legislation, the establishment of settlement houses for new immigrants and the women's suffrage movement.

A restructured haggadah, which includes portrayals of several Jewish women important in the Exodus story, was recently produced by the Task Force on Equality of Women in Judaism, of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues, a branch of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

The purpose of the haggadah is to encourage family members to share equally in the Passover experience. Women are urged to lead the Seder, while men are encouraged to clean the house and prepare the Passover meal. (For a listing of other recently compiled feminist haggadot, see "How Was This Passover Different From All Other Passovers?" LILITH No. 3—Spring/Summer '77)

The Task Force, composed of Reform Jewish women, was established to assess the needs of women and to transform their demands for equality within Judaism into reality. In addition to the Haggadah, the Task Force has produced a glossary of non-sexist terminology for the High Holy Days. It has also issued a commentary on the Ten Commandments and the Book of Ruth, and has developed a consciousness-raising program for synagogues.

Information on the above publications may be obtained from:

The New York Federation of Reform Synagogues (NY branch of UAHC)
838 Fifth Ave.
New York NY 10021

The life and work of Theresa Serber Malkiel (1874-1949), a prominent American Jewish labor leader, are discussed in an article by Sally Miller in the December 1978 issue of *American Jewish History.*

Malkiel was an independent, assertive Jewish woman who dedicated herself to unionizing women workers, alleviating the plight of foreign-born women, campaigning for women's suffrage and honoring the Socialist Party's commitment to sexual equality. Among other things, Malkiel organized both the Women's Infant Cloak Makers' Union and the first branch of the Socialist Women's Society of New York.

Woman—Esha—Each Sister Helps Another is a new handbook put out by the counseling program for single parents, widows and women in crisis, sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women. The handbook is available for use by the administrators of similar programs around the country.

National Council of Jewish Women
15 East 26 St.
New York NY 10003

Now that the period required for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment has been extended, prominent supporters and opponents of the amendment have rallied their forces for a new and intensified campaign.

A recent booklet put out by the National Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress and entitled *ERA—The Time Has Come,* evaluates the organization's efforts on behalf of the amendment's passage and outlines strategy for the future.

The 27-page booklet, compiled by Beth Hurwitz, National Women's Division Program Director, is a well-researched and highly informative document. In addition to summarizing the American Jewish Congress' record of support for the ERA, the booklet provides a history of the amendment from its origins in the 1920's, until the present, as well as a point-by-point "Imaginary Dialogue," which presents the commonly cited arguments for and against the ERA.

ERA booklet
National Women's Division
American Jewish Congress
15 East 84th St.
New York NY 10028

The Paper Pomegranate, the bulletin of the Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework, is a valuable source of information on various aspects of this novel art form. The 17-page bulletin contains announcements of upcoming exhibits, articles dealing with Jewish needlework in various countries (including sample stitches unique to that Jewish community), book reviews and listings of new publications in the field. A Guild group show will be on exhibit at 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, Sept. 10 through Nov. 31.

The Bulletin is available, at $2.00 per copy, from:

The Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework
One Fanshaw Avenue
Yonkers NY 10705

A new bibliography, listing sources that offer critiques of the volunteer system, has recently been published by the Council of Planning Librarians.

Compiled by Doris B. Gold and entitled, *Opposition to Volunteerism: A Bibliography,* the work includes sections on the historical background of the volunteer system, the economics of volunteerism, N.O.W. (National Organization for Women) pamphlets and literature presenting the position of opponents and works which offer definitions of volunteerism. Copies may be ordered for $3.50 each from:

The Council of Planning Librarians
1313 East 60th St.
Chicago IL 60637

Professor Sol Liptzin's recent pamphlet, *Rehabilitation of Lilith* traces the history of the legend and examines the development of a more positive attitude toward this independent Jewish female on the part of various authors and artists.

Professor Sol Liptzin
21 Washington St.
Jerusalem 94187
Israel

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Schools

Comprehensive Jewish education and rich English curriculum for girls and boys K-8. Small classes. B'NAI JESHURUN DAY SCHOOL, 270 W. 89 St., NYC.

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Publications

The Feminist Press is not just another publishing house. We are a nonprofit, tax-exempt institution working in many different ways to create renewed respect for women, their learning and their literature. Send for a free catalog from The Feminist Press, Box 334L, Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568

The Singles Newsletter is a monthly listing of social events and Jewish education for singles in the NY metropolitan area. For information call (212) 751-1000 x336

Career Counseling

ASSERTIVENESS, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, SELF-MARKETING WORKSHOPS.

Learn how to transfer skills, present them proudly. New groups starting soon in NYC. Individual counseling, resume preparation also available. Call **Ruth Shapiro Associates**, (212) 889-4284.

Real Estate

For your real estate needs—San Francisco Area, Contra Costa County—Contact: Bobbie Schleder, Century 21 Watts, 1419 N. Broadway, Walnut Creek, Cal. 94596. Office, (415) 937-4040, Residence, (415) 933-0339.

Kibbutz

Join in creating a new kibbutz in Israel, beg. May, 1980 based upon organic farming and perhaps a natural food store and restaurant. Garin Shalom, POB 21134, Wash., DC 20009.

Organizations

Zahavi, The Israel Assn. for the Rights of Large Families, believes "Our children are our gold." For information write Zahavi, 5 Pinhat Shapira, Haifa, Israel.

The Generation After is an organization dedicated to ensuring that the Holocaust not be repeated or forgotten. Its members are children of survivors, and other Jews and non-Jews, concerned with the "struggle against inhumanity, tyranny and all vestiges of the Nazi scourge." For information write: The Generation After, 2747 Throop Ave. Bx., NY 10469.

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